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Eur. 305^t - 12 *Williams*



T H E
RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRESENT STATE
O F T H E
NORTHERN GOVERNMENTS;

V I Z.
THE UNITED PROVINCES, DENMARK,
SWEDEN, RUSSIA, AND POLAND:

O R,
O B S E R V A T I O N S

O N
THE NATURE, CONSTITUTION, RELIGION, LAWS, POLICY, CUSTOMS, AND
COMMERCE OF EACH GOVERNMENT;
THE MANNERS AND DISPOSITIONS OF THE PEOPLE;
THEIR MILITARY FORCES BY LAND AND SEA;
THE REVENUES AND RESOURCES OF EACH POWER;
AND ON
THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONJUNCTURES WHICH HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO
PRODUCE THE VARIOUS REVOLUTIONS WHICH HAVE HAPPENED IN THEM.

THE WHOLE DIGESTED FROM THE MOST AUTHENTIC RECORDS
AND HISTORIES, AND FROM THE REFLECTIONS AND REMARKS
MADE DURING A TOUR OF FIVE YEARS THROUGH THESE
NATIONS.

By J. W I L L I A M S, Esq.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:

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TABLE of CONTENTS.

VOLUME II.

BOOK IV.

OF the Constitution, Laws, Policy, Customs, Religion, Commerce, Revenues, Resources, Military and Naval Forces of RUSSIA; with some Observations upon the Revolutions which have happened in this Government, and which must always be the Consequence of arbitrary and despotic Governments.

CHAP. I. <i>Of the Rise and Progress of the present Government in Russia,</i>	Page 1
CHAP. II. <i>Of the Form of Government at present established in Russia,</i>	289
CHAP. III. <i>Of the Manners and Customs of the Russian Nation,</i>	301
CHAP. IV. <i>Of the Laws, Customs, and Policy of Russia, respecting Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce,</i>	315
CHAP. V. <i>Of the Revenues and Resources of this Kingdom, and of her Military Force by Sea and Land,</i>	329
CHAP. VI. <i>Of the Causes of the various Revolutions which have happened in this State,</i>	338

BOOK V.

Of the Constitution, Laws, Policy, Customs, Religion, Commerce, Revenues, Resources, and Military Power of POLAND; with some particular Observations upon the Revolutions and Civil Wars which have always been so destructive to this Kingdom from the defects of its Government.

CHAP. I. <i>Of the Rise and Progress of the present Government in Poland,</i>	345
CHAP.	

C O N T E N T S.

CHAP. II. Of the Form of Government at present established in Poland,	Page 624
CHAP. III. Of the Manners and Customs of the Polish Nation,	— 637
CHAP. IV. Of the Laws, Customs, and Policy of Poland respecting Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce,	— 645
CHAP. V. Of the Revenues and Resources of this Kingdom, and of her Military Forces,	— 651

Of the Constitution, Laws, Policy, Customs, Religion,
Commerce, Revenues, Resources, Military and Naval
Forces of Russia; with some Observations upon the
Revolutions which have happened in this Government, and
which must always be the Consequence of arbitrary and
despotic Governments.

CHAP. I. Of the Rise and Progress of the present Government in Russia,	Page 1
CHAP. II. Of the Form of Government at present established in Russia,	289
CHAP. III. Of the Manners and Customs of the Russian Nation,	301
CHAP. IV. Of the Laws, Customs, and Policy of Russia, respecting Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce,	315
CHAP. V. Of the Revenues and Resources of this Kingdom, and of her Military Force by Sea and Land,	329
CHAP. VI. Of the Causes of the various Revolutions which have happened in this State,	337

B O O K V.

Of the Constitution, Laws, Policy, Customs, Religion, Com-
merce, Revenues, Resources, and Military Power of Poland;
with some particular Observations upon the Revolutions and
Civil Wars which have always been so destructive to this
Kingdom from the defects of its Government.

CHAP. I. Of the Rise and Progress of the present Government in Russia,	Page 1
CHAP. II. Of the Form of Government at present established in Russia,	289
CHAP. III. Of the Manners and Customs of the Russian Nation,	301
CHAP. IV. Of the Laws, Customs, and Policy of Russia, respecting Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce,	315
CHAP. V. Of the Revenues and Resources of this Kingdom, and of her Military Force by Sea and Land,	329
CHAP. VI. Of the Causes of the various Revolutions which have happened in this State,	337

THE

R U S S I A
The inhabitants of this vast empire were originally called
Roxolans, afterwards Moscovites, and now they are known by
the name of Russians.

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O F T H E

NORTHERN GOVERNMENTS.

B O O K I V.

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the Revolutions which have happened in this Govern-
ment, and which must always be the Consequence of
arbitrary and despotic Governments.**

C H A P. I.

Of the Rise and Progress of the present Government in RUSSIA.

THE Russian empire is one of the largest in the known world; it is bordered on the north by the Frozen Sea; on the east by the empire of China; on the south by the empire of Indostan, by the kingdom of Persia, by the Caspian and Black Seas, by part of the Turkish dominions, and by Poland; on the west by Sweden: it contains an extent of territory equal to all the other kingdoms of Europe.

VOL. II.

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The

The inhabitants of this vast empire were originally called Roxelans, afterwards Moscovites, and now they are known by the name of Russians.

To give a particular description of this immense tract of country, as far as it is known at present, would swell this work much beyond what I intended, and would be deviating, in a great measure, from my plan; therefore I shall confine myself to a brief description of this empire, which, comprehending all its conquests and acquisitions, except what was lately ceded by the crown of Poland, is divided into sixteen governments; many of these contain immense provinces, which, when the country is more peopled, will undoubtedly be subdivided.

The government which is the best known, and which contains the western province of the empire, is Livonia, one of the most fertile provinces in all the North. It was inhabited by Pagans even at the beginning of the thirteenth century, when the Danes and the merchants of the Hanse towns carried on a commerce there, and converted some of the inhabitants to Christianity: afterwards the Order Teutonic seized upon this province, and Albert margrave of Brandenburg, grand master of those religious conquerors, was declared prince of this country and of Brandenburg Prussia in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Afterwards both the Russians and the Poles claimed this province; then the Swedes took possession of it, and it was alternately ravaged by all those powers. Gustavus Adolphus totally subdued it, and it was ceded to Sweden in the year 1660 by the famous treaty of Oliva. The czar Peter afterwards conquered it from Charles the Twelfth, and it was ceded to Russia by the treaty of Neustadt

Neustadt in the year 1721, and has ever since remained under the Russian government.

The duchy of Courland, which joins to Livonia, has always been supposed to depend upon the crown of Poland; but it is at present much more under the influence of the Russian government than that of Poland.

In proceeding north from Livonia, we enter into the government of Revel and Estonia. Revel was built by the Danes in the thirteenth century. The Swedes afterwards conquered Estonia, and it remained in their possession from the year 1561 till the time that czar Peter conquered it from Charles the Twelfth. This province was likewise ceded to Russia by the treaty of Neustadt. The coasts of Estonia are washed by the gulph of Finland; and at the eastern point of this gulph, where the river Neva and the lake Ladoga disembogue themselves, is the city of St. Petersburg, one of the finest and best built cities in all the North. It was built by the emperor Peter the First, notwithstanding all the obstacles he met with in carrying his great plan into execution. This magnificent city is defended on that side next the sea by the fortress of Cronstadt; which, considering the difficulty and danger of navigating a large naval force through the gulph of Finland, is sufficient to guard it on that side from the attempts of any enemy. St. Petersburg is ornamented with thirty-five great churches, for in it almost every sect of the Christian religion is tolerated; with five palaces, some of which are superb, particularly that which is called the New Summer Palace, near the Triumphal Port, which is an elegant piece of architecture; with those superb buildings that are used for the college of admiralty, for the cadets, for the imperial

imperial colleges, for the academy of sciences, for the exchange, and a great variety of other buildings, which are equally magnificent. All the neighbourhood of this city is covered with country-houses and gardens; though in the year 1702 it was a marshy ground, with some few huts of fishermen built here and there near the river. It is supposed that St. Petersburg contains at least four hundred thousand people: it is the capital of Ingria, another little province that was conquered from Sweden by Peter the First, and, with Vibourg and that part of Finland which was likewise conquered from Sweden in the year 1742, makes another government.

To the north of these provinces is that of Archangel; a country very little known to the inhabitants of the southern parts of Europe: it derived this name from its being supposed to be under the protection of St. Michael the Archangel, some time after the Russians had embraced Christianity, which was not before the middle of the eleventh century: but it was not till the year 1533 that this country was known to other nations, when the English, in endeavouring to find a north-east passage to the East Indies, discovered the port of Archangel, in the White Sea; but it was then only a desert country, with a convent, and a little church dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel. From this port the English sailed up the river Dwina till they came into the middle of the Russian territories, and for some time carried on a considerable commerce through this channel, as the port was open seven months in the year: they obtained leave to trade to this place without paying any customs, although this was the only port that the Moscovites had at that time open to the ocean. The Hollanders soon after found the way likewise

to

to Archangel, and divided the Russian trade with the English till czar Peter opened the Baltic Sea to his States.

To the west of Archangel, and under its government, is that part of Lapland which belongs to the Russians, inhabited by the same species of people who inhabit the Danish and Swedish parts of Lapland, which I have already described. The inhabitants of Russian Lapland are supposed to be of the Greek church; but the greatest part of those who live in the northern parts, and who have little communication with the Russians, content themselves with worshipping God according to their respective modes.

In going up the river Dwina, from Archangel towards the south, we pass through the middle of the Russian territories; and the first place of any consequence we arrive at is Moscow, situated in the middle of a large and fine plain, in the latitude of fifty-five degrees and twenty minutes, upon the river Moscow. The country about this city, which was formerly the capital of the empire, is extremely fertile and pleasant; and if it had been ten degrees more to the south, would have been one of the most agreeable countries in Europe.

Moscow is a very large city, but irregularly built; all the common people live in small huts made of wood: towards the end of the thirteenth century this city was nothing more than an assemblage of these cottages. The palace of the grand duke, which is an irregular Gothic building, was built in the fourteenth century; which, together with the patriarchal church and some palaces of the nobility, constitute all the magnificence of this great city, where there are more than five hundred

hundred thousand inhabitants, and is above twelve English miles long.

Theodore Alexiowitz, the eldest brother of czar Peter, was the first who began to embellish Moscow; he built several large houses of stone, but without any regular architecture, and also encouraged the principal nobility to build in the same manner, advancing them money, and furnishing them with materials for this purpose. Peter likewise, although he built St. Peterbourg, did not neglect Moscow: he ordered it to be paved and ornamented with several grand edifices. There is lately an university established in Moscow, and several useful manufactures, particularly a manufacture of table linen, which for beauty and elegance equals any thing of the kind in Europe.

To the west of the duchy of Moscow is that of Smolensko: these two provinces, together with those of Mitzislaw and Polosko, which were lately ceded to Russia by the Poles, form what is properly called White Russia. Those two, with that of Smolensko, appertained originally to the dukes of Russia, but they were afterwards conquered by the great duke of Lithuania, about the beginning of the fifteenth century; and one hundred years after were re-conquered by their ancient masters: but Sigismund, the third king of Poland, retook them in the year 1611, and Polosko and Mitzislaw remained in the possession of the Poles till they were lately ceded to the empress of Russia by the present king; but czar Alexis, father of Peter the Great, recovered Smolensko in the year 1654, and it has ever since formed a part of the Russian empire.

Between

Between Smolensko and St. Petersburg is the province and government of Novogorod. It is said that it was in this province that the ancient Slavonians first established themselves, and built the great city of Novogorod, situated upon a navigable river; and that they carried on an extensive commerce with the Hanse towns, with which they were then in alliance. It is certain that this city was very famous in those days for its great fair, and formed a magazine, not only for all the productions of the North, but for many of the commodities of the southern parts of Europe. The czar Iwan Waffiliewitsch conquered it in the year 1467, and carried off all its riches, which contributed greatly to the magnificence of the court of Moscow, till then but little known.

To the south of the province of Smolensko is that of Kiowia Czerniko and the Ukraine, which are watered by the Dnieper, and a number of other small rivers. The capital Kio, or as it was formerly called Kisovia, was built by the ancient emperors of Constantinople, who made a colony of it: several Greek inscriptions, of more than twelve hundred years old, are to be seen there at present. This is the most ancient town in all this country, and the only one that has been inhabited for so many centuries, without having been walled round and fortified: it was the residence of the great dukes of Russia till the eleventh century, when the Tartars conquered all this part of the Russian dominions. The inhabitants of the Ukraine, who are at present Cossacks, are a mixture of the ancient Roxelans and Tartars. This country formed a part of the ancient Scythia, and is one of the most fertile tracts of country in the whole world. The Cossacks united themselves to the Russians in the year 1654, but still supported an independent government; and it was

Peter

Peter the Great who subjected them entirely to the Russian government. However they still elect a hetman, or governor, who is their chief, but he must be approved by the court of St. Peterbourg. This rich and fertile country is often plundered by the Tartars, who come in large bodies and destroy every thing, carrying away as many of their cattle and sheep as they can drive. In the beginning of the last war, while the Russian troops were called off against the Turks, a large body of Tartars invaded the Ukraine, and carried off cattle, sheep, and other commodities to the amount of several millions of roubles.

To the north-east of the province of Kiovia, between the Dnieper and the Tanais, or Don, is the government of Belgorod, which is as great as that of Kiovia. This province is equally fertile with that of Kiovia, and furnishes an immense quantity of cattle, and of sheep, to Poland, to Courland, and even to Livonia and Riga, which are known by the name of the Ukraine cattle.

To the north of this government, after having passed the Tanais, is the government of Woronez, which is watered by the river of this name, that falls into the Tanais. It is said that Peter the Great constructed the first fleet he had, to act against the Turks, in this place. Still farther towards the north-east is the government of Nischgorod, which is watered by the Wolga, and is extremely fertile in grain, as well as in cattle and sheep.

To the south-east of this government is the kingdom of Astracan, situated in a delightful climate, between the latitude of forty-three and fifty degrees; and containing about ten degrees

of longitude. It is watered by the great river Wolga, and by several small rivers. This kingdom is extremely fertile by nature, but very little cultivated, as it is chiefly inhabited by the Tartars, who neglect agriculture, but support themselves by hunting and robbery. The greatest part of this kingdom is still in the state of nature; here are vast deserts covered with pasture, and with all kinds of wild fruit and herbage; and the sheep, cattle, and all the domestic animals run wild in the woods.

The kingdom of Astracan is a part of this country that was conquered by Gengis-Kan, and afterwards by Tamerlane: in those days the Tartars pushed their conquests even to Moscow.

The czar John Basilides, one of the greatest conquerors who ever appeared in Russia, delivered his country from the dominations of the Tartars about 1545; and, in the year 1554, he added the kingdom of Astracan to his other conquests.

Astracan is bordered by Europe and Asia, and extremely well situated for the commerce of either; as the great river Wolga, which is navigable for more than six hundred leagues, and falls into the Caspian Sea by the town of Astracan, is well calculated, either for transporting the merchandizes of Persia and India into Europe, or for transporting the European merchandizes into Asia: but if the river Wolga was joined with the lakes Ilmen and Ladoga, and with the Tanais, which I am informed the present empress speedily intends to effect, there will be one of the finest inland navigations in the known world between the Baltic and the Caspian Seas. This was one of the great projects of the emperor Peter, which he began to carry into execution. There is a whole suburb of the town of Astracan inhabited by

Indian merchants, and others, who transplanted themselves thither for this purpose.

To the south-east of the kingdom of Astracan is a little government, which was lately formed, called Orembourg: the city of this name was built in the year 1734, upon the banks of the river Jaik. This country is very mountainous; in the avenues of which, and upon the banks of those rivers which descend from them, there are chains of forts built, at proper distances, to defend the country from the robberies of the Tartars. Vast numbers of Persians, who escaped from the civil wars, have taken refuge in Orembourg, with all their effects: the Indians, and great numbers of Persians, come hither to traffic; so that this city is lately become the magazine of all the Asiatic commodities.

To the north of the kingdom of Astracan, and the government of Orembourg, is the kingdom of Hasen, which is also a part of the conquest of John Basilides. A great part of this country is peopled by Mahometans and Tartars: it extends even to Siberia, and was formerly very rich and flourishing; indeed it is still in a good situation, being the magazine of the furs of Great Tartary, and the merchandizes of Persia. In one of the provinces of this kingdom, called Solkamskaja, they have still the coin of the first caliphs in circulation; and there is still found among the people some of the ancient golden idols of the Tartars; but at present there is very little commerce carried on in this province.

To the east of the provinces of Archangel, and of the kingdoms of Kazan and Astracan, is the great government of Siberia,

with all the provinces which are annexed to it. It is bordered on the south with Persia and India; on the east by Kamskatka and China, and on the north by the Frozen Ocean. From Kazan to the frontiers of China are about twelve hundred leagues; and from India to the Frozen Sea about four hundred: this country is chiefly inhabited by Tartars, Samoiedes, and Ostiaks, and produces the richest furs, with which they pay the tribute they owe to the empress of Russia.

This country was not discovered till the sixteenth century; when some of the inhabitants, who spoke a different language from that of the Moscovites, brought some of their rich furs to traffic with the inhabitants of Archangel for pieces of pointed iron and glass. The people of Archangel followed them into their own country, and then discovered that they were the Samoiedes, a people who were nearly of the same stature with the Laplanders, but of a different race: they were ignorant of the use of bread; and, like the Laplanders, they made use of the rein-deer to draw their sledges over the ice; they lived in caverns and in huts in the middle of the snow.

The Samoiedes are a race of men different from all the other inhabitants of the North: they have the under jaw more advanced, and their ears are larger and higher; neither the men nor the women have any hair but upon the head, and the nipple of the breast is as black as ink. This race of people are as singular in their morals, as in the formation of their bodies, which in other respects are not much unlike the Laplanders; they render no species of worship to the Supreme being, although they acknowledge a good and a bad principle: as they are almost with-

out passions, so they are equally without vices and injustice; robberies and murder are unknown among them: their extreme simplicity has not yet permitted them to form abstracted notions, and to define the nature of vice and of virtue. When they were first conducted to Moscow, they were struck with admiration, they regarded the emperor as their God, and voluntarily submitted to make him an yearly offering of rich furs. The Indians immediately established colonies, and built fortresses beyond the rivers Obi and the Jenisea.

Where the river Tobol falls into the river Irtysh, in the middle of a plain is built the town called Tobolskoy, the capital of Siberia, which is at present very considerable. Siberia was formerly more peopled than it is at this time, especially the southern parts of it, where the ruins of cities and colonies appear to this day. This immense tract of country is yet but little known, although the Russians are daily making discoveries in every part.

To the south of the country of the Samoiedes, upon the borders of the river Obi, is the country of the Ostiaks, who are in no respect like the former, except that they support themselves by hunting, fishing, and pasturage. Some of them are without any religion, because they are not combined together, but are dispersed in the woods; the others have a kind of worship, but they make it subservient to their wants. One of the principal objects of their adoration is the sheep, because nothing is more necessary to their existence than this animal; its flesh nourishes them, and its skin covers them. The Ostiaks have likewise some other idols, but they are not worthy of our attention. Some of them were made Christians in the beginning of the

the present century ; but through their extreme ignorance they are Christians without knowing why.

To the south of the Ostiaks, upon the borders of Persia, are the Burates, another herd of those people, who are still idolaters, and who are not yet intirely subjected to the Russian government. None of these herds have any knowledge of the calendar, they keep their accounts by falls of snow, as there is a long and regular descent of snow every winter. All the southern parts of Great Tartary are inhabited by different herds of Tartars. The ancient Turks were inhabitants of this part of Tartary before they subdued the country of which their descendents are at present in possession. Those called Calmouks and Monguls are the descendents of the Scythians, whom Gengis-Kan and his children led even into Germany, and who formed the empire of the Mogul under Tamerlane.

The most eastern province of the Russian dominions is Kamkatka ; the inhabitants of which, when it was first discovered, were without any species of religion. The northern part of this province furnishes the richest and finest furs, with which the inhabitants cloath themselves in the winter, but go intirely naked in the summer. In the southern parts of this province the men have long beards ; but, in the northern parts, as in the country of the Samoiedes, and of the Laplanders, they have no beards at all ; so that it may justly be said, that there is as great a variety of people, and as different manners and customs in the Russian empire, as there are in any country of the known world.

It will be seen that all the territories which compose the Russian empire, from Finland to the borders of China, have been united at different times. Originally the inhabitants of this immense country were Scythians, Slavonians, Celts, and Huns; to whom were added Cossacks, Calmouks, and the different herds of Tartars, with the origin of which we are entirely unacquainted.

A great part of this empire is still covered with immense forests and marshes; indeed it may be justly said that not one twentieth part of it is cultivated: it is extremely well watered with large navigable rivers; and if there had been a communication between them, which might be easily effected, this country would be the best calculated of any we know for an inland commerce and navigation. The Dnieper and the Don, or Tanais, are navigable between two and three hundred leagues each, run southward, and fall into the Black Sea: the Wolga, which is increased by the Oka, and a variety of other little rivers, is navigable above six hundred leagues, running first towards the east, and afterwards south, and falls into the Caspian Sea at Astracan: the Dwina is navigable near two hundred leagues, runs westward, and falls into the sea at Archangel: the Irtysh and the Obi are navigable near three hundred leagues each, and fall into the Northern Ocean. Peter the Great had undertaken to make an inland navigation from St. Petersburg to the Caspian Sea, by cutting canals to join the lake Ladoga with the river Wolga; which plan I hear the present empress is about to carry into execution.

When we take a view of the Russian empire, even in its most early ages, when it was divided into principalities, it appears

pears that its government was always despotic, rather than monarchical. The sovereign of the Russians was never under the direction of any laws; it was he alone who had the right to make and to break them at his sole pleasure; he was always master of the lives and properties of his subjects, and lands could not pass from father to son without his approbation. The government has always been hereditary; and daughters had a right to succeed to it as well as sons: but the father was at liberty to name either of his children whom he should think proper to succeed him in the government.

The Russian annals give no account of their government before the year 860; when, it is said, one of the principal men of the state, called Gostomissel, seeing the chiefs of the people in a state of uncertainty whom they should chuse for their master, advised them to confide the supreme dignity to strangers, who had no interest among them, rather than to any of their own people. Struck with the seeming justness of his opinion, they followed his plan, and unanimously elected Rurick and his two brothers, princes of the nation which then inhabited Ingria, to be their governors: but they reigned together only two years, and Rurick remained sole sovereign of the country, by the death of his two younger brothers, who died without children; he united under his dominion the provinces which had been governed by his brothers, and formed a state; which contained only Novogorod, Ingria, and two or three small provinces which lay contiguous to the lake Ladoga.

Soon after two chiefs of the people of Ingria, who were attached to the fortune of Rurick, the one called Skold, the other Dire, demanded liberty to retire to Constantinople, which they

they easily obtained; but, on passing along the Dnieper, the people of Kiovia, who had been ill treated by the Khofares, or Tartars, who inhabited the banks of the river Don, to whom they paid tribute, put themselves under their dominion, on which they began immediately to discipline their new subjects; they afterwards not only reduced these Tartars to their obedience, but pushed their conquests even into Poland; and in the year 865, formed the siege of Constantinople, having first laid waste all the country round it.

Rurick died in the year 878, and left his son Igor under the guardianship of his uncle Oleghe, who, shocked at seeing Skold and Dire in quiet possession of Kiovia, which, he pretended, ought to appertain to his pupil, assembled a very considerable army of all the people under his government, and marched to dispossess them of their acquisition: in his passage he besieged and took Smolensko and Labez, and encamped his army near to Kiovia, under pretence of demanding a passage into Greece. He carried the young prince Igor with him, and when he came near to the town, he desired an interview with Skold and Dire; who not suspecting his intentions, came into his camp unattended, without any apprehension of danger; when Oleghe reproached them with having usurped the patrimony of the son of Rurick, sole sovereign of all the Russias, ordered them to be slain in his presence; and then established his residence at Kiovia; where all the people of Russia were to bring the tributes which they were ordered to pay. Novogorod, which was till this time the capital of the Russian government, was now taxed in common with all other parts of their dominions.

About

About the year 898 the Hungarians, a nation that inhabited the eastern side of the Wolga, made a descent upon the Russian provinces, which they ravaged; and after having demanded an annual tribute, and taken hostages for the payment of it, they continued their progress, and established themselves upon the banks of the Danube.

About this time, according to the Russian annals, writing was first introduced into Russia. The Bulgarians, say they, who inhabited the northern parts of Bulgaria on the banks of the Danube, were a colony of Slavonians, and were baptized into the Christian faith about the year 867, when their chiefs demanded of the emperor of Constantinople some Ecclesiastics to teach them the doctrines of the Christian religion in the Slavonian language, as they were then entirely ignorant of Greek and Latin. Some time afterwards the emperor sent them two brothers, who were well versed in their language, and who taught them to write, and to translate the New Testament into their native language. These missionaries, with the assistance only of two Slavonians, soon made a translation of the New Testament; which is the same translation they use at present in Russia.

As soon as the young prince Igor had attained manhood, he married a young woman of Pleskow, called Olgha; and his example has been constantly followed by his successors, who have generally chosen their wives from among their subjects. It was the custom in those days, when the sovereign had formed a resolution to marry, to publish an edict, enjoining all those fathers, whose daughters were marriageable, and who were handsome enough to be the choice of their sovereign, to bring them to

court, when the prince examined them, in a disguised habit; and to the lady he preferred, he immediately made a present of a wedding suit, and sent the others home with rich presents.

In the beginning of the tenth century the Russians, under the conduct of Igor and of his uncle Oleghe, laid siege to Constantinople: the emperor was obliged to submit, and to give hostages for the payment of a considerable annual tribute; for the better security of this contract it was accompanied with an oath reciprocally sworn; the Christians swore upon the Cross, and the Russians before the idol of their god Penune; whereupon those victorious princes, after having hung their bucklers upon the gates of Constantinople, returned to Kiovia, laden with the spoils of the timid Greeks.

In the year 938, Igor, supposing that he had some cause of complaint against the Greeks, assembled a powerful army and ravaged all Asia Minor and the coasts of the Black Sea; but afterwards he was defeated, and almost all his army destroyed: the few Russians who escaped the massacre, rather than the battle, described this terrible scene to their compatriots in the following manner. The Greeks, say they, are enchanters; they threw fire into our vessels like flashes of lightning, which obliged our soldiers to throw themselves into the sea to avoid being burnt. This is the description which the Russians have left us of the famous Gregorian fire, which made the Greeks so formidable by sea in those days. However, Igor some time afterwards, to revenge the affront which he supposed had been done to his honour and to his arms, raised another very great army and marched directly to Constantinople, which he laid under contribution, and the emperor

emperor was obliged to purchase a peace by the payment of a yearly tribute. This peace was concluded in the year 945, with the same formalities as the former, only the Russians as well as the Greeks swore now upon the Cross, as the former were become Christians as well as the latter.

The following year Igor made war upon the Drewlians, a powerful people, who were then established in Lithuania; but he was killed in an ambuscade of the enemy, and left his dominions to his young son Swatoflaw, under the guardianship of his mother Olga, who no sooner took the reins of government into her hands than she resolved to revenge the death of her husband; a bloody war ensued, in which the Drewlians were always defeated, and at last obliged to make peace with the Russians, by paying them a considerable tribute yearly.

Soon after this Olga undertook a journey to Constantinople, and was baptized in this capital into the Christian faith, and changed her name for that of Helen. Through her means, and by her authority, the Christian religion was spread throughout all the Russian dominions; so that the Russian church has placed her among the number of the saints, and they celebrate her festival on the 11th of July.

When her son Swatoflaw grew up, he became also a formidable warrior, and conquered a very great extent of territory. It is said that he made ten nations tributary to his crown, particularly the Bulgarians, from whom he took near fourscore towns upon the banks of the Danube. He changed the seat of his empire from Kiovia to Pereflwale, where, say the Russian annals, the Greeks furnished him with gold, wine, fruits, grain,

and stuffs; the Hungarians and the Bohemians with horses and with silver; while, at the same time, he drew from Russia honey, wax, hydromel, and men: but his great conquests and his bad policy ruined his empire. He was killed in the year 972, upon the banks of the Dnieper, after having concluded a peace with the Greeks, and divided his dominions among his sons. He gave Kiovia and its districts to Jaropolk; the country of the Drewlians to Oleghe; and the district of Novogorod, and the ancient Russian dominions of Rurick, to his natural son Wladimir: which disposition prevented the Russians for a long time from making any figure among the powerful states. However, from the natural strength and ferocity of the old Slavonians, after some years this natural son united all the dominions of his two brothers to his crown, and became the sole sovereign of all the Russias.

Wladimir was an idolater, and gave himself up to the most scandalous excesses: he had several lawful wives of different nations in his palace, and more than six hundred concubines; but although he appeared to be plunged in all kinds of excesses and debauchery, he was not the less formidable to the neighbouring princes, every one of whom sought his alliance. As he was undetermined what religion he should embrace, all the priests of the different religions established in Europe and in Asia endeavoured to draw him over to their party: the Jews were not without some hopes of making him a convert to the Mosaic institutions; the Pope sent him several ecclesiastics of the Latin church; and the Greeks sent him a learned prelate of their communion to explain to him the history and the doctrine of the Old and New Testament. Wladimir at last resolved to chuse one of these religions; but, not to be made the dupe of artful and designing

designing men, he dispatched emissaries secretly into all these countries, who were to make themselves fully acquainted with their different forms of worship as well as their morals, and to make a report to him at their return : at length from these accounts, and the persuasions of his mother Maluska, he determined in favour of the Greek church ; in which communion he was baptized, and afterwards married Anne the sister of the emperors Constantine and Basil. Wladimir himself visited all his provinces, accompanied by a Grecian Bishop, and with an uncommon share of zeal persuaded all his subjects, who were not yet Christians, to embrace the Christian faith ; so that the Russians have likewise placed him among the number of their saints, and celebrate his festival on the 15th of July. He made a collection of all the different laws and regulations of his kingdom, and published the first code that was ever published in his states in the year 1017.

Wladimir reigned till the year 1035 ; and when he died divided his dominions among his twelve sons, who by an almost uninterrupted scene of wars, cruelties, and bloodshed destroyed each other and their respective territories, till Jaroslaw now only remaining, united to his dominion all the provinces which had been under his father's government, and assumed the title of sovereign of all the Russias. He soon after made war upon the Lithuanians, who being a warlike people during the civil wars of Russia had revolted from his government, and obliged them to submit and become tributaries to his crown. He married his eldest daughter to Casimir king of Poland, and his second daughter to Henry the First of France, grandson of Hugh Capet.

Jaroslaw

Jaroslav took every prudent step to establish the Christian religion in Russia, by founding and endowing several churches, by translating several Greek books into the Sclavonian language, and by causing the first code of ecclesiastical laws to be published in his country. He died in the year 1054, and, by the bad policy which then prevailed, divided his states between his five sons, whom he exhorted above all things to live in peace with each other: but no sooner was he interred than his four younger sons made war against their elder brother, and forced him to fly into Poland for refuge.

Some time after Boleslas king of Poland reconducted him into his dominions with a powerful army, where he assumed the title of Grand Duke of all the Russias; but he died soon after, and his brother Usevolod succeeded him in the dignity of grand duke, who likewise added the title of Jaroslavitz to his name, that is, son of Jaroslav. After a reign of fourteen years, in which nothing remarkable happened, this prince died at Kiovia, the 13th of April 1093. According to the Russian annals, the memory of this prince was dear to all his subjects: he loved justice, say they, and in this corrupted century had a singular aversion for all kinds of debaucheries.

He was succeeded by Wladimir the Second, who, after the example of his grandfather Jaroslav, was absolute and even despotic in all his dominions, and assumed the title of Sovereign of all the Russias. His reign was glorious, carrying his arms into Hungary, where he gained great advantages over that country; he was the terror of the Tartars; made a cruel war on the Bulgarians upon the banks of the Danube; and in the
year

year 1125 threatened the Greek emperor, who, to keep him off his frontiers, sent him several rich presents by some bishops, who gave him the title of Czar or Emperor. He carried away immense riches which the merchants of Genoa had deposited at Caffa, where they had a great trade in those days, with which he made the superb ornaments that were used for the coronation of the sovereigns of Russia, and which his successors employed at their respective coronations till the last century. From this time till the year 1156, the Russian annals give us only an uninteresting history of wars against the Tartars, and of civil commotions.

In the year 1127 Wladimir the Second died, and divided his dominions among his sons, so that we find nothing but confusion till the year 1157, when George duke of Suzdale, and afterwards of Moscow, laid the foundation of the city of Moscow. The territory of Moscow now became an independent principality; the title of Great Duke was given to its dukes, and its capital was regarded as the capital of all the Russias: Kiovia was no longer esteemed as the first city of this empire.

George was acknowledged as great duke of all the Russias; but as he, as well as his children, were opposed in their pretensions by a variety of the princes of the blood-royal, who were possessed of little principalities in this extensive empire, we find nothing but a continued scene of civil wars, confusion, and bloodshed, which greatly weakened the empire, till the memorable year 1237; when a great army of the Mogol Tartars entered Russia under the command of Bathow Kan, grandson of the famous Gengis Kan, and laid waste all the country through which they passed: they took all the considerable places in
the

empire, and the whole country was exposed to rapine and plunder. The great duke George the Second was killed in battle, and the whole empire obliged to submit, and become slaves and tributaries to the Tartars.

Russia continued in this abject state for near two hundred years, during which interval the little princes of this country, always jealous of each other, constantly endeavoured, without policy and even without shame, to gain the protection of their tyrants; so that, instead of shaking off their yoke, they took every method to rivet it the more firmly.

Masters of the whole empire, the Tartars deposed several of the little princes and dukes, whom they afterwards massacred and pillaged, and at length, about the year 1262, they placed Alexander Newski upon the throne, to whom they gave the title of great duke: this prince, although he was tributary to the Tartars, was warlike, enterprizing, and possessed many good qualities. He beat the Swedes and the knights of the Teutonic order; and for his great virtues, love of justice, and strict adherence to religion, the Russian Church has placed him among the number of her saints; but he had not forces sufficient to shake off the dominion and yoke of the Tartars.

In the year 1715, the emperor Peter the Great built a superb monastery near St. Peterbourg in honour and under the invocation of this saint; and the empress Catherine the First, in the year 1725, instituted to his honour the order of St. Alexander Newski.

This

This prince made Moscow the capital of his states, and died in the year 1270, leaving his dominions to his brother Jaroslas, who reigned only seven years, and left the government to Daniel, who built the citadel of Moscow, which is commonly called the Kremlin, and which was in after-ages the residence of the great dukes; but he was afterwards deposed by the Tartars, and the government given to his brother Basil, who was the favourite of the Kan of the Mogol Tartars, at this time the real sovereign of all the Russias. This prince had likewise the title of great duke; and, agreeably to the policy of these times, divided the provinces of the empire among his relations, the princes of the blood, after having received an oath of fidelity from them: he paid a considerable tribute to the Kan of the Tartars, and imposed one upon all the little princes in his dominions. Basil was succeeded by his cousin Demetrius, son of duke Alexander; but he was soon deposed by his brother Andrew, who reigned in 1282.

The Russians now began to recover strength, and to make head against the Tartars, who perceived that they could not govern any longer in Russia, but by dividing the forces of this country; and therefore they furnished troops to Andrew to divide the government with his brother.

About the year 1319 George the son of Daniel, duke of Moscow, was acknowledged as great duke of Russia; but he was soon afterwards assassinated by the grandson of Jaroslas. George particularly protected by the Kan of the Tartars, who, when he heard of his assassination, became furious, and resolved not to name another Russian to the dignity of grand duke, but to divide this empire into principalities, and to establish Mogol princes

princes in the different governments: and for this purpose he sent one of his lieutenants, at the head of a powerful army, with orders to seize upon the duchy of Iwere, and to make himself be proclaimed duke of it: this Kan afterwards pretended to give laws to all the other provinces of Russia, and to force all the inhabitants to change their religion; but Alexander duke of Iwere, who was driven out of his capital by this Tartar duke, attacked the enemy's army with such fury, that he destroyed the greatest part of them: those who escaped took refuge in the citadel of Iwere, and were burnt by the conqueror.

If the Russians had not been divided among themselves, and, by the bad policy of their former great dukes, the empire had not been parcelled out into little principalities, they might now have easily thrown off the Tartar yoke: on the contrary, Iwan Danielowitz, or the son of Daniel duke of Moscow, was named great duke of Russia by the Kan of the Tartars, on condition that he joined his forces to the Tartar army, to destroy Alexander and the inhabitants of Iwere. This prince mounted the throne by the massacre of his subjects, and supported himself on it by shedding their blood: he augmented the town of Moscow, and formed a rampart of wood about it; he built the cathedral church of St. Michael, which for 400 years has been the sepulchre of the great dukes.

During this and the preceding reigns there was no form of government in Russia: the country was almost destroyed by the continual inroads of the Tartars; and, when these Barbarians were retired with their plunder, it was still more depopulated by the wars which those little sovereigns waged among themselves, in disputing the extent of their respective dominions and authority.

The

The Russian history is full of confusion, disorder, and fable, till the year 1380, when we find Demetrius the Third, a warlike prince, upon the throne of this empire, who, soon after his advancement to this dignity, was attacked by the kan of the Tartars, who entered his dominions at the head of a formidable army, over whom he gained so complete a victory, that the field of battle was covered with dead bodies for fourteen wersts or ten English miles.

The Russian annals moreover inform us, that the following year Tocatmisch, great Kan of the Tartars, who was afterwards conquered by Tamerlane, marched against Demetrius with all his forces, took the cities of Wladimir and Moscow, and put all the inhabitants to the sword; ravaged the whole country, and carried away an immense plunder.

From this time the Russian annals are again full of confusion and obscurity till the year 1462. We only see that the Tartars, though divided among themselves, were absolutely masters of Russia, and created and deposed the little sovereigns of this country as they thought proper, till the reign of Iwan Basiliewitz, who mounted the throne this year, and soon afterwards reconquered several of the provinces which the Tartars had before unjustly seized.

He afterwards married the grand-daughter of Emanuel the Second, emperor of Constantinople, who excited her husband to shake off the ignominious yoke of the Tartars, and to begin with laying siege to the castle of Moscow, where they still supported a garrison, under pretence of a dream, in which, she said, that God had commanded her to build a church in that place: her

invention succeeded, and the Tartars were driven out of Moscow, on which Iwan pushed his conquests still farther, and in less than two years drove the Tartars out of the Russian dominions.

The great city of Novogorod was in those days the magazine of all the merchandizes of the North, and become very rich and powerful: the inhabitants had formed themselves into a republican government, after the example of the Hanse towns, with whom they were in alliance, and were in a situation to bring 200,000 men into the field. However, notwithstanding this formidable power, and the alliance of the Hanse towns, Iwan resolved to attack them, and to bring those republicans under his dominion; with this view he laid siege to the town with all his forces. The citizens defended themselves through a series of seven years, but at length were obliged to submit, and to surrender all their treasures to the conqueror.

Afterwards Iwan reduced all the little principalities of the Russian empire under his obedience, and then by an express law, which has since been regarded as a fundamental principle of the state, he abolished all those little sovereigns in the empire; assumed the title of sovereign of all the Russias, and of grand duke of Moscow, Wlamidir, Novogorod, &c. He next turned his forces against the Tartars, from whom he conquered the kingdom of Kasan, and then added the title of czar, or king of Kasan, to his other dignities.

This prince, after having reigned forty-four years as an absolute and despotic sovereign, and vanquished all his enemies, died in the year 1505, and left his crown to his son Basil; who
had

had no sooner mounted his throne, than he sent an ambaffador to Mendi-Geri, Kan of the Crim Tartars, to renew the treaty of peace, which had been figned between the two nations during his father's reign: but the Kan was by no means difpofed to confent to thefe conditions, from a fuppoftion that Bafil was not fo formidable an opponent as his father had been; and, after having kept the ambaffador at his court for feveral months, fent him away with two deputies, who prefented fome new articles for Bafil to fign, with which they demanded a prompt compliance. Aftonifhed at receiving fuch a mark of haughtinefs from a little prince from whom he had nothing to fear, Bafil immediately fent away the Tartars with orders to inform their Kan, that he wifhed to have the treaty figned immediately, as it had been in his father's life-time, without any alteration whatever, otherwife he would come himfelf at the head of 100,000 men, and let the Kan know that he was not to be treated in fuch a manner; whereupon Mendi-Geri figned the treaty without any hesitation.

During the reign of this prince, fome Englifh veffels, fent out by Edward the Sixth to make discoveries in the North, found themfelves imbayed in Archangel Road, and foon afterwards, by little prefents, made themfelves acquainted with the inhabitants of the country.—When it was known at the court of Ruffia that thefe ftrangers were at Archangel, Bafil immediately fent orders to conduct them to Mofcow; then it was that the firft treaty of commerce between England and the Ruffian empire was agreed upon.

The Englifh give a magnificent description of the court of Bafil, and of his power. It is faid that this emperor could then
bring

bring 900,000 men into the field; notwithstanding it was not permitted to enrol either merchants or labourers. Out of 900,000 men they chose 300,000 who formed the army; and the rest were dispersed in the different parts of the empire. They received no pay, and supported themselves at their own expence, and by plunder: there is some part of the irregular Russian troops upon the same footing even to this day; these troops, as well as those of the Tartars, with whom they were chiefly engaged in war, consisted more in cavalry, than in infantry; the former were covered with iron-armour, and had helmets upon their heads; and no soldiers were more enured to fatigue, or could tolerate hunger and cold with more patience; they were often obliged to feed their horses with the leaves and barks of trees. The prince's tent was ornamented with magnificent tapestry both within and without. The Russians had very little military discipline in these days; they seldom gave the enemy battle in a regular form; but either formed their attacks in a disorderly manner, or endeavoured to draw their enemies into an ambuscade. The emperor recompensed generously those who performed any signal acts of bravery.

At this time all the lands in Russia were fiefs, and those who cultivated the earth were slaves, upon the same footing that they are at present. Whenever these warriors distinguished themselves, the emperor made them presents of fiefs, in proportion to their services, and then all the farmers who lived upon their fiefs became the slaves of their new lord. When the possessors of these fiefs died without male heirs, the land returned to the sovereign, excepting that, as a particular favour, he continued the daughter of the late proprietors in the possession, on condition

tion that they supported a certain number of soldiers. When the emperor was informed that he had any subject in his states who was very rich, and who did not serve in his army, he sent for him immediately to court, and of his own authority stripped him of the greatest part of his treasures, leaving him only a moderate subsistence for himself and for his family : this treasure constituted a part of the fund which was designed to recompense officers of merit. Nothing gives us a clearer idea of the despotism of the sovereigns of Russia in those days ; and yet it is generally agreed that no people were at this time more submissive, and with more resignation sacrificed their lives and properties in the service of the state.

In the year 1514 Basil was attacked by the Tartars, the Poles, and by the Teutonic order, and found himself greatly embarrassed ; on which he sent an ambassador to Maximilian emperor of Germany to desire his alliance and assistance, which was soon granted ; and as this treaty will inform us of the idea which Maximilian had of Basil's power, I will exhibit it at large, as translated from the original copy at Moscow.

“ According to the will of God and our own affection, we
 “ Maximilian, by the grace of God elected emperor of the
 “ Romans, for ever august, king of Hungary, Bohemia, &c. &c.
 “ We have established an affection, eternal alliance, and brotherly
 “ friendship with our brother the great lord Basil, by the grace
 “ of god emperor and sovereign of all the Russias, grand duke,
 “ &c. &c. We will live in brotherly love, union, and friendship
 “ with him during the whole course of our lives ; and our
 “ descendants shall live in the same brotherly love and friendship
 “ with his descendants as long as it shall be pleasing to God.

“ And

“ And he who is the friend of us Maximilian king of the
“ Romans, of Hungary, and of Bohemia, &c. &c. and of our
“ imperial majesty, shall also be the friend of you Basil, by the
“ grace of God emperor and sovereign of all the Russias;—and
“ whoever shall be our enemy shall also be your enemy: and if
“ any one is your friend, he shall also be our friend; or if he is
“ your enemy, he shall also be our enemy. If you our brother
“ are in want of our assistance against your enemies we will act
“ sincerely and give you aid, according to the tenor of our agree-
“ ment, if God assist us; and in case we shall be in want of
“ your assistance you shall give us aid with equal sincerity. And
“ as your enemy, as well as our enemy, Sigismond king of
“ Poland and grand duke of Lithuania has done us as well as
“ you great injustice, and has been no less oppressive of the
“ Teutonic order, unjustly retaining under his dominion several
“ castles in Prussia, and has formed a design to destroy all that
“ part of Prussia which belongs to that order; and, with equal
“ injustice, retains under his dominion the castle of Kiow, part
“ of your territories, as well as several other castles belonging
“ to your subjects; we will be united against our said common
“ enemy Sigismond, and we will do ourselves justice against our
“ common enemy as far as God shall enable us. We Maximilian,
“ &c. will act for this present time against Sigismond as much
“ as God shall aid us; and we will endeavour, in the first place,
“ by negotiations, which shall be carried on sincerely and
“ without fraud, to make him restore those castles, &c. which
“ he retains so unjustly under his dominion. And you, great
“ prince Basil, shall act sincerely against your enemy the king of
“ Poland; but, in the first place, you shall endeavour by
“ negotiation to make him restore your paternal inheritance.
“ And in case that either of us shall be obliged to attack our
“ said

“ said common enemy, we will give intelligence of it reciprocally
“ to each other, and we will make a common cause against our said
“ enemy. We Maximilian, &c. if we march to attack the said
“ king of Poland, we will make it known unto you; and if
“ you, our brother, shall go to attack our common enemy, you
“ will make it known unto us, and you will make a common
“ cause with us by giving us information, and we will imme-
“ diately go against him likewise. And if it shall so happen
“ that, because of the great distance between us, we cannot
“ immediately advise you of our intentions, and that we are
“ obliged to attack the king of Poland with promptitude,
“ you, Basil, shall equally be united with us, whether you
“ go yourself against him, or whether you send your captains
“ with your forces; and the same shall be said on our part.
“ And if God the Lord of his great mercy assists us against our
“ common enemy the king of Poland, so that we may be able
“ to retake our castles, we will however be always united against
“ our said common enemy; and if our attempt should not
“ succeed, we will ever be united against our enemies during
“ our lives. Our messengers and merchants shall always be free,
“ and pass without any interruption in your country; and your
“ messengers and merchants shall always be free, and pass with-
“ out any interruption in our country. Signed in our city of
“ Brundenau, August 4th, in the year 1514, and in the
“ twenty-ninth year of our reign as king of the Romans, and
“ in the twenty-fifth as king of Hungary, &c.

“ MAXIMILIAN.”

This treaty not only shews us the high idea which the emperor Maximilian entertained of Basil's power, but will also

shew us the simplicity, and at the same time the expressive style which they used in those days.

In the year 1521, the Kan of the Crim Tartars entered the Russian dominions at the head of a powerful army, and after having established his brother in the kingdom of Kasan, which had been under the Russian dominion, he laid siege to Moscow; and Basil, who some years before was judged to be so formidable, in order to prevent the entire destruction of this city and of his country, was forced to sign a treaty, by which he acknowledged himself to be tributary to the Tartars; whereupon the Kan retired with the testimony of the abject condescension of that very prince who had menaced him some years before: but being desirous of obtaining possession of the fortress of Rezan, he sent an order to the governor to deliver it up to his troops, under pretence that Basil, as his tributary, was obliged to give him free entry into his fortifications; on which the governor answered imperiously, That his master was neither a slave nor tributary to any person. The Kan, to convince the governor of the truth of what he had advanced, sent him the original treaty: the governor was at first surprized; but, after some reflection, kept the treaty, and immediately discharged all his artillery among the Tartars, who by this means were thrown into the greatest confusion, and retreated precipitately without daring to demand the treaty. Before they had time to return into the Russian territories, Basil was ready with an army to receive them.

This prince died in the year 1534, and was so much esteemed, that all the orders of the state took an oath of fidelity to his son.

son Iwan, though he was then only four years of age, and proclaimed Helen his mother regent during his minority.

Towards the end of this year seventy ambassadors arrived at the court of Moscow from as many princes or chiefs of respective nations of Tartars; they had in their train 700 military persons and 4000 merchants, who conducted 50,000 horses to sell. Helen administered the affairs of government during the minority of her son with great firmness and courage; and though her enemies often attacked her son's dominions during her regency, she always disconcerted their projects.

Iwan took the reins of government into his own hands in the year 1545; and, as soon as he had established his authority in his own states, resolved, after the example of other kingdoms, to wear a crown, as an external mark of the supreme authority with which he was invested: he took the title of czar, or king of the Russias; for though some of his predecessors had assumed the title of czar or king of Kasan, he was the first who was proclaimed czar of the Russias.

In the year 1548, Iwan formed the design of re-conquering the kingdom of Kasan, which the Kan of the Crim Tartars had taken from his father: for this purpose he led a formidable army into this kingdom, and laid siege to the capital, from a persuasion that on the reduction of this town depended that of the whole country; but the Russians, accustomed to make war only for the sake of plunder, soon grew tired of the exact discipline which their sovereign made them observe; they immediately began to complain, and from complaints they proceeded to menaces, and at length were about to abandon their
E 2 camp

camp and return into their own country. Iwan saw with indignation, that through the revolt of his soldiers he should lose the conquest which so much flattered his ambition: however he dissembled his resentment, and re-conducted his troops to Moscow. When he arrived here, he assembled all the chiefs of the people, and after having given them an exact account of his unhappy expedition, he ordered, according to common custom, a public entertainment; all the officers of the army, and particularly those who were the principal authors of the revolt of Kasan were invited, to whom were distributed robes of black sattin; but all the rest of the assembly had robes of red sattin. When the entertainment was finished the emperor made a public oration, in which, after he had praised the fidelity of some of his officers, he exclaimed against the insolence and disobedience of others, and concluded by declaring, that he would take such vengeance as should strike terror in those who should ever think of perpetrating the like crimes; whereupon, without any other ceremony or form of trial, all who were in black robes were delivered to executioners, who waited without to seize them, and immediately put to death.

This, with some other acts of severity, though they were just requitals for crimes actually committed, induce the Russian writers to place this prince among the number of the most cruel tyrants; but this does not at all appear to have been his character. It is certain that he was very severe in the execution of justice; but considering the barbarity of those times, and of the people of whom he was sovereign, there was a necessity for his treating delinquents with rigour, otherwise his government would have soon been at an end.

Having

Having been informed that one of his judges had received a goose full of pieces of gold from one of the parties who had a law-suit before him, he appeared for some time to be ignorant of this transaction; but afterwards, when he saw the effects which this goose had produced, he ordered the executioner, without any ceremony, to give this judge the knout (a severe flagellation with a whip formed of very hard and thick thongs) and to ask him at every lash how the flesh of the goose tasted?

In the most barbarous ages, hospitality was regarded as one of the principal moral virtues by the Russians as well as by the Tartars; and as this prince would often disguise himself, and mingle among all ranks of people to hear what his subjects said of him, he one day feigned himself to be extremely fatigued, and demanded hospitality in the evening in a village not far from Moscow; but all the inhabitants of the village shut their doors against this supposed stranger, except one, who was poorer than all his neighbours, who received him into his hut, where his wife was ready to be delivered of a child, which happened indeed while the emperor was present. Very early next morning he quitted the hut, and promised his host to return soon with godfathers and godmothers for the child; and he kept his word; for the farmer the next day saw the emperor with all his court arrive: he ordered the child to be baptized immediately, and then made it a considerable present; he likewise ordered all the houses in the village to be razed to the ground, except the house of him who had shewed him hospitality. This is, said he, addressing himself to the inhabitants, to engage you to be hereafter more charitable to strangers; undoubtedly you will become so when you yourselves have felt how disagreeable it is to lie in the open air during the inclemency of the season.

In the year 1552, this prince led another powerful army against the Tartars, to re-conquer the kingdom of Kafan, over whom he gained a complete victory. The next morning Iwan gave orders to decamp, and to pursue the remains of the enemy's army; but the soldiers mutinied, and declared, that if he did not give them some rest, and every thing they wanted, they would immediately quit their standards and return to their own homes. The emperor, very far from shewing any act of violence, or appearing shocked at this indiscreet menace, dismounted immediately from his horse, and walked through all the ranks to obtain information from every soldier what were his wants; and having learnt that it was violent fatigue alone that produced these murmurs, he gave orders that they should have some days of rest. When the soldiers had rested only some hours, and refreshed themselves, they surrounded the czar, and desired him to lead them on against the enemy. Such condescension is not the characteristic of a furious person or of a tyrant, as some of the Russian authors have represented this prince.

This year he re-conquered the kingdom of Kafan; and the following that of Astracan, in which he established a tributary king.

These anecdotes of the life of Iwan, although they are otherwise of no great importance, serve to elucidate the character of this prince much better than the partial histories which are written of him by the Russians; at the same time they give us an idea of the barbarity in which the inhabitants of this nation, although they called themselves Christians, were plunged.

The

The emperor had a great esteem for queen Elizabeth of England, who sent an ambassador to his court at Moscow. This minister, at his first audience, appeared covered before the czar, who, surprized at this act of boldness, asked him, If he was ignorant of the manner in which he treated insolent ambassadors? to which the minister replied, I know, prince, what you would say; but I am the ambassador of queen Elizabeth, who never takes off her cap nor uncovers her head before any prince in the world; and, if her minister is insulted, she knows how to revenge herself as a great queen. Upon which the emperor turned to his courtiers, and said, This is a man of resolution and bravery, who dares speak and act in this manner for the honour and interests of his sovereign; which of you, cowards as you are, would dare do the same thing for me? This anecdote gave rise to that absurd story which was afterwards told of this prince's having nailed an ambassador's hat to his head.

In the year 1556, upon a quarrel which arose between two governors upon the frontiers between Russia and Sweden, Gustavus Vasa, then king of Sweden, sent an army into Russia, with orders to lay waste all the country with fire and sword. Iwan prepared to receive him; but before he offered him battle, he wrote to his general Paletiki to inform Gustavus, that he would be the author of all the cruelties which should be committed, as well as the cause of shedding a sea of Christian blood, if he did not accept an interview which he then offered him to settle their differences; consequently this cannot be said to have been the language of a tyrant or of a barbarian.

When

When the czar had conquered the kingdoms of Kafan and Astracan, he received some deputies from Edigieri, prince of a part of Siberia, who proposed to the czar to pay him an yearly tribute of some rich furs, and to take an oath of fidelity to him, if he would grant him his protection, which the czar readily accepted: then it was that he saw his authority extend from the Frozen Sea to the borders of Persia; and from the Mountains of the Eagles, the country of the Calmoucks, and the Caspian Sea in the East, to Livonia, Courland, Prussia, and Poland in the West; but his ambition was more extensive than this tract of country; he wanted the rich province of Livonia, and declared war against the knights of the Teutonic order, under whose dominion it was at that time. The chief of this order, seeing the storm ready to break upon his head, sent a public minister to Iwan to adjust their differences; but this prince would not hear any of their propositions, and told the minister, that the order was totally degenerated from the valour of their ancestors; that they had neither laws, honour, or honesty; that they were no longer Christians, but prophane wretches, ready to follow the first barbarous opinion that was propagated among them.

This war was very bloody, and Livonia was almost ruined; but by the assistance which they received from the king of Poland, Iwan could not gain any great advantage over them.

In the year 1563, Iwan demanded the princess Catherine, daughter of Sigismund king of Poland, in marriage; but instead of accepting this advantageous proposition, which would have established peace in the two kingdoms, the Poles, in the place
of

of the princess, sent the czar a mare finely cloathed. This terrible affront, which was unpardonable in the Poles, was followed with the most dreadful consequences. Iwan entered Poland at the head of a powerful army, laid waste all the province of Lithuania, and gave the palatinate and town of Ploczko to be pillaged. This is often the destiny of a people, whose blood is spilt to expiate the injuries which are supposed to have been received from their master.

As Iwan had so often made the province of Livonia the theatre of war, the inhabitants had expressed an invincible hatred against him; so that he perceived that he should never be able to make them submit, and acknowledge him for their sovereign; he proposed therefore Magnus duke of Holstein, the king of Denmark's brother, to be their king, gave him his sister Mary in marriage, and reserved only a small tribute for himself from the kingdom which he had created. Supported by the czar, part of the Livonians acknowledged the new king; but the inhabitants of Riga and of Revel chose rather to put themselves under the protection of the Swedes and of the Poles; whereupon this country was again made the theatre of war, which was carried on with various success; but at length Magnus, tired of being a king only by the appointment of the czar, received the crown from the hands of the Livonians, who took an oath to obey him as their legal sovereign.

As soon as Iwan was informed of this ceremony, which was performed at Venda, he immediately led an army against that city: at his approach the inhabitants shut their gates; and, while Iwan made preparations to besiege the town, the citizens held a counsel; being convinced that they had not any mercy to hope

from an offended monarch, and conscious that they were not in a situation to make any long resistance, as their magazines and store-houses were almost empty, their consternation became general, and was very soon succeeded by despair: they all saw, and felt themselves guilty, and soon acquiesced in the terrible resolution of setting fire to the town, and burying themselves under its ruins, rather than submit to the punishment which they supposed Iwan would have inflicted upon them. Magnus declared that he would sacrifice himself for his people; and immediately divested himself of all his royal ornaments, clothed himself in mourning, and went into the camp of the czar, where he threw himself at the feet of that prince, and implored his mercy for the unfortunate citizens; but Iwan in a fit of choler loaded Magnus with the most outrageous language, struck him, and sent him out of his presence chained as a criminal. The Livonians seeing from their towers what passed in the camp of the czar, and certain of the punishment they were to receive, as they had all lighted torches in their hands, they set fire to the town, which soon after communicated itself to some gunpowder which they had placed in divers parts, whereby the town was soon destroyed, and all who were in it.

The ravages which the Russians committed in Livonia were almost beyond all description; so that when the king of Poland declared war against the czar, two years afterwards, he reproached him with having committed such acts of barbarity in Livonia, and in the northern parts of Poland, as were unworthy even of the most uncivilized Pagan; “And, added the king of Poland, “if you will not immediately make reparation of the wrongs you have done, I shall have a greater desire to destroy the Russians, than zeal to revenge the Poles.”—However Iwan was

was now become so powerful, that the king of Poland and his allies could gain but few advantages over him, and they were obliged to console themselves with the losses they had sustained. The reconquering Livonia, which the Russians had almost converted into a desert, was all the victory that they could boast of having obtained over this prince, though he was now shaken with age and infirmities.

In the year 1580, when the czar Iwan was grown old, and his army had been several times worsted by the Poles and their allies, some of the principal persons of his kingdom spirited up the people to send a deputation to the czar, to intreat him to place the prince Iwan, his eldest son, at the head of the army; which, in fact, according to the customs of this country, was to divest himself of the royal dignity in favour of his son. The czar, enraged at this proposition, sent away the deputies with indignation, and the next day presented himself in the great parade without guards, where he threw down his crown in the middle of the people, and stripped himself of the imperial robe. "Give
" this robe, says he, to any one who knows how to command
" better than I, and to whom you will be more obedient. I have
" conquered the kingdoms of Kasan and Astracan; I have van-
" quished the Turks; and I have always supported the glory of
" my kingdom: during my reign, the Russians have never been
" insulted with impunity; and, in gratitude for all I have done
" for you, you want to dethrone me, and to give my crown to
" another." The people immediately burst into tears, and kept the profoundest silence, waiting the conclusion of this singular scene; when some courtiers cried out, You are our czar, and we will have no other but you. Whereupon all the people fell upon their knees, and his courtiers took up the crown and the robe,

and intreated Iwan to invest himself again with his regal ornaments. “ I shall not take them, said the czar, but to punish
“ those who have been the authors of this infamous plot :
“ then, turning himself towards his son, he said, Is it
“ thou then, unhappy wretch, who wouldst make my people
“ rise in rebellion against me ? Is it thou who wouldst make
“ thyself be proclaimed sovereign, to bereave me of my crown ?
“ Certainly thy project was not only to make me descend to the
“ state of a private person, but also to cut short my days.
“ Since therefore thou hast forgotten that I am thy father, and
“ thy sovereign, in punishing thee I shall forget that thou art
“ my son, and only remember that strict justice which a sove-
“ reign should employ against a rebel subject : the punishment
“ thou shalt receive, shall be a lesson for sons to respect their
“ fathers, even when they are under misfortunes.” Young
Iwan endeavoured to justify himself, but he had not the time to
do it ; his father, to impose silence upon him, gave him a blow
upon the head with his cane, which made him stagger, and at
length he fell at his father’s feet, and appeared to be dead :
when the emperor saw what he had done, his great wrath was
instantly succeeded by despair and tenderness ; he called him
his dear son, threw himself upon his body, and bathed it with
his tears : the young prince opened his eyes, and seeing his
father in that situation said, “ I die content, as your tender-
“ ness for me has made you shed tears ; I call heaven to witness,
“ that I was not the author of the project of which you accuse
“ me ; it is God’s will that I should perish in this manner, but
“ I should be much better satisfied if it had been in the midst of
“ our enemies.” The prince died five days after, and left his
father in the greatest trouble and despair : he would have given
his crown cheerfully to have recalled him into life, but it was

now too late; he never rejoiced afterwards, but died the same year.

Almost all the historians who have written the account of these times, have represented this prince as the greatest tyrant and barbarian, and have not endeavoured to separate those parts of his character which were formed by the manners of the country: certainly Iwan would have had an amiable character, if he had been born and educated in any other country, and among a civilized people. He was naturally generous, and a lover of gratitude. All the places and employments during his reign were given to men of merit: he loved justice; but, from the barbarity of the country and of the age, he had no idea of mercy, although he pretended to be very pious: he had strong passions, which, as they were never corrected by education or by reason, led him to many acts of violence, of which he soon afterwards repented: he was the first who called learned men and artists into Russia, but the people then were too barbarous to be improved by their means.

He caused a new code of laws to be published in the Russian language; and as they tend to cast some light upon the manners and customs of the age, I shall translate some of the principal regulations specified in them.—“ When a man shall be
“ condemned to pay a fine of a rouble (which is about four shil-
“ lings sterling) he shall pay to the judge two copicks and half
“ (a copick being the hundredth part of a rouble) and one copick
“ to the attorney.—If two persons who are at law with each
“ other, shall agree between themselves, before the judge has
“ pronounced sentence, they shall, notwithstanding, pay the
“ sums above-mentioned.—If the judge shall condemn an
accused

“ accused person to justify himself by arms, and shall appoint
“ the time and place, which he alone has the right to do, such
“ accused person shall pay him fifty copicks, and the attorney
“ two copicks and half, even supposing that the parties shall
“ agree between themselves without fighting.—If the accu-
“ ser and the accused shall fight, the vanquished person shall
“ pay to the vanquisher the sum that is demanded of him; and
“ shall give sixty copicks to the judge, together with his arms,
“ and fifty to the secretary of the court.—A man who is ac-
“ cused of having set fire to a house, of having committed mur-
“ der, or of having committed a robbery, must always justify
“ himself by a duel; and if he is vanquished, his accuser may in-
“ sist upon having the most valuable things he possesseth: the
“ judges shall levy the sums abovementioned upon his goods,
“ and shall, moreover, order him a corporal punishment, pro-
“ portioned to the crime which he has committed.—Mur-
“ derers must always be punished with death.—Spies, blas-
“ phemers, those who retain freemen in slavery, those who
“ place secretly in the houses of particulars such goods as be-
“ long to themselves, and afterwards say that they have been
“ robbed; and, in fact, those who shall be convicted of magic,
“ or of forcery, must be punished with the most cruel death.—
“ A man who shall be condemned of a robbery, for the first
“ time shall receive the knout, and pay a fine: those who
“ shall be caught in the act of robbery, for the second time
“ shall be punished with death, if he has not property sufficient
“ to pay the value of what he would steal, and, at the same
“ time, to pay the judges.—A man who is accused of a rob-
“ bery shall justify himself by arms; and, if he is vanquished,
“ his property and his person shall appertain to his accuser.
“ If a man shall be surprized in the very act of robbery, who
is

“ is suspected to have robbed before, he must immediately bring
“ two persons of known property to attest that he has never
“ robbed before, and that he has always behaved himself ho-
“ nestly; otherwise he shall be punished with death, and his goods
“ shall be given to his accuser. The sentences that shall be taken
“ in writing shall pay one rouble each; besides the judge shall
“ receive thirteen copicks for his fee, and the attorney three;
“ and the person who is appointed to put the czar’s seal to it shall
“ receive a copick and half. The inferior-judges have only the
“ power to condemn a man to pay a conditional fine, but they
“ must always send the case to the superior judges to be finally
“ decided.—When any man would accuse another of a capital
“ crime, he must come to Moscow, and present himself before
“ the judge, and tell him that he desires that such a person
“ should be cited before the justice; on which the judge shall
“ immediately send a serjeant to search after the accused; and
“ if he does not confess his crime, the judge shall demand what
“ evidence the accuser has to support his charge; and then both
“ the accuser and the accused shall produce all the witnesses
“ they can; the former to support the accusation, and the latter
“ to contradict it. The accused has likewise the liberty to ar-
“ raign any of the witnesses, and demand the decision of a duel;
“ and the judges shall be obliged to grant it him. Both the
“ parties may substitute others to fight in their place; but they
“ shall not be permitted, in this combat, to make use of the
“ bow and arrow: their offensive arms shall be the javelin, the
“ lance, the sabre, and the poignard; their defensive arms shall
“ be the coat of armour, the shield, and buckler.—The testi-
“ mony of a nobleman shall have more weight than that of six
“ persons of a mean situation in life.—Every person shall
“ plead his own case.—The judges are obliged to render justice
“ gratis.

“ gratis.—Those who think that their cases have been inade-
“ quately judged, may appeal to the prince.”

Nothing can give us so clear an idea of the ignorance and barbarity of the inhabitants of this nation in those days, as the laws abovementioned; where both the accuser and his witnesses were obliged to support their charge by force of arms; if the accused was bold and enterprizing, and skilled in the use of arms, which those people generally were who would run the risk of their life for the sake of bringing a criminal to justice.

After the death of Iwan, the people turned their attention towards his son Theodore to succeed him in the government; but this young prince, whom his father had always kept at a great distance, was very little acquainted with the administration of publick affairs; and being naturally weak and timid, Iwan, when he saw his end approaching, appointed Bogdan Bielski, one of the noblemen of his court, to be regent of the kingdom. But Bielski no sooner saw himself absolute master of the government, than he formed a resolution to mount the throne, and to sacrifice the young Theodore to his ambition: in order to succeed in this enterprize, he endeavoured to gain over the nobility to his party by promises, and the soldiers and people by presents; but his plot was discovered, and he was obliged to abandon the reins of government.

The people, as soon as they had recovered themselves from the terror, pressed Theodore to be crowned, in order to prevent the like attempt in future. No sooner was this ceremony performed, but this prince received a very advantageous proposition
from

from a Cofack, who had made some conquests in Siberia. I have already observed, that a little prince of Siberia had put himself under the protection of the czar Iwan, and had paid him tribute; but from the continual wars which this monarch had to support, he had not any opportunity of turning his attention towards this country: in the beginning of the reign of Theodore, a Cofack, called Jermak, established himself, with about 1000 soldiers of his nation, between the rivers Wolga and Oka, where he robbed all the vessels which passed those rivers, and sometimes laid the neighbouring towns under contributions. The governor of Moscow, informed of these depredations, sent a body of troops against this robber, who killed 400 of his men, and forced him to fly with the other 600 into Siberia, where he pillaged all the villages, and penetrated even to the town of Sibir, or Tobolskoi, which was then the residence of the Kan of this country. The Kan immediately betook himself to flight, but his wife and children fell into the hands of the Cofack, who prosecuted his conquests in Siberia; and to obtain his pardon, offered the czar the sovereignty of the country. Theodore readily accepted the proposition of the Cofack, and created him prince of Siberia; and soon after a large body of forces was sent to his assistance, who not only proceeded to cultivate the country, but built several towns in it.

In the year 1589, the patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople arrived in Russia to collect the alms which he was to employ in order to gain the favour of the grand visir, who had deposed him, and appointed another in his place. This political prelate, who was perfectly well acquainted with the art of managing his friends in a court given up intirely to ambition, soon discovered that the primate Job had a great ascendancy over the clergy, and that

the czar also submissively followed the advice of this metropolitan; he therefore proposed to consecrate the Russian primate a patriarch, and to invest him with the same authority in Russia which the patriarch of Constantinople had over the Christians in Turkey. The proposition was accepted: Job soon obtained the consent of Theodore, and was consecrated; and from that moment he nominated the metropolitans and archbishops of Russia, and ceased to be dependent upon the patriarch of Constantinople.

This patriarch holds the fifth rank in the Greek church, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Russia. They preserve the anniversary of this famous æra in all the Russian churches to this day, where these patriarchs are exhibited under the symbol of the five senses.

Theodore, as hath been already observed, was not only weak and timid, but indolent, and with great difficulty supported the weight of the government; he therefore, to extricate himself from the embarrassment of it, chose Boris Godunow to be his favorite: this new minister, whose sister Theodore had married, soon usurped the supreme authority; and not being content with governing his master in a despotic manner, like a heathen tyrant, wanted to destroy him, and to ascend the throne himself. Certainly there is not perhaps in the known world a country where those who call themselves nobles, are and have always been such insufferable tyrants, so void of humanity, of all the social virtues, and of all the attributes of a reasonable being, as they are in the Russian dominions. But the czar had a younger brother, who was presumptive heir to the crown, and who was an obstacle to his ambitious career, and therefore
Godunow

Godunow persuaded Theodore to send his brother Demetrius at some distance from the court to the town of Uglitz, with his mother, his nurse, and all his mother's relations. This point being gained, the favorite no longer kept any measures with the rest of the nobility; he shut up some in prison, poisoned others, and for the most trifling offences destroyed others by the hands of the common executioners. The more obstacles Godunow encountered, the more his ambition was inflamed: he could not come near the object of his ambition while young Demetrius lived; he therefore resolved to poison him; but all his attempts were frustrated: the people now began to take the alarm, and to watch over the precious days of this child: however at length he procured two assassins to murder him in his own house at Uglitz; and this villain, supposing that he should be able to impose upon the whole kingdom by the researches which he made after the authors of this crime, immediately destroyed the town of Uglitz, and the greatest part of its innocent inhabitants perished by the hands of the executioners.

But these bloody acts did not make the people less clamorous; the inhabitants of Moscow in particular, notwithstanding the frequent executions which they every day saw among themselves, did not cease to talk publicly against the tyranny of this minister; he therefore ordered some of his dependents to set fire to that part of the town where they lived; and while their buildings were destroying by the flames, his guards, and those who were under his direction, cut the throats of all those who had held any discourse against him.

Nothing was heard of in Russia at this time but executions, murders, poisonings, and other infernal acts of this nature: hu-

humanity, justice, religion, and every other social virtue were now banished from this unhappy country.

Towards the end of the year 1595, Boris Godunow advanced by great strides towards the throne; but an event happened at this time which accelerated his progress. The Kan of the Crim Tartars made an excursion into the Russian dominions at the head of a great army; Theodore sent a considerable army against him, and, for the first time, shewed his firmness by giving the command of it to Michael Bezin, against the advice of his favorite.

Bezin gained a great victory over the Tartars, and when they came to inform the czar of it, he turned towards Boris, and said, "It is my will that my orders should be executed; I would have you remember that I am king."

These words cost him his life:—Boris, fearing to lose the ascendancy which he had gained over his master, employed two whole years to form a party in the kingdom, and when he thought himself properly supported, he poisoned Theodore; who, when he was ready to expire, sent for the patriarch, who was also secretly in the interest of this infernal wretch, and expired with great resignation in his arms.

Thus perished the czar Theodore, the last of the Rurick race, who had occupied the throne of Russia since the year eight hundred and sixty; a prince who was equally without virtues and without vices; he suffered himself, through pusillanimity, to be directed by one of the greatest villains that ever disgraced the human race. During his reign the most atrocious and barbarous

Barbarous scenes of villainy were countenanced and protected among all orders of men, and every thing that was virtuous and praise-worthy was discouraged. Theodore was content with the title of sovereign, which, in fact, he was very unworthy to bear; there was not any thing that pleased him so much as being in the monasteries, where his most serious occupation was that of tolling the bells.

When Boris had stained every step leading to the throne with blood, he burnt with a desire to ascend it; but the only means he had by which to succeed in his scheme, was to seem indifferent about it.

As soon as the death of Theodore was made known in Moscow and in the provinces, all the principal persons in the state convened together to proceed to the election of a new czar. The ancient royal family was totally extinct, and there was no person then existing in the kingdom to direct them in their choice; every one of them thought himself worthy of the crown, and for this sole reason opinions and votes were greatly divided. Godunow appeared to be very indifferent with regard to every thing that passed, but with secret joy saw the divisions and irresolution of the electors; nevertheless the tumult increased, and they were ready to decide this momentous affair, as they decided most of their little law-suits, by force of arms, when the patriarch Job rose up in the assembly, and turning himself towards Boris, as they had before agreed, and raising his voice so as to be heard by all the assembly, said, “ We are searching at a distance
“ for him who alone is worthy of the throne of Russia, and
“ who is present among us; his air of candor, his air of
“ disinterestedness, clearly point him out to me; it is Boris
“ Godunow.

“ Godunow; the nobility of Ruffia will remember the prudence
“ and wisdom with which he conducted himself in the govern-
“ ment which Theodore entrusted to him. The fear of chastise-
“ ment prevented disturbances, the laws were duly observed,
“ the unhappy were relieved from their unhappiness, and merit
“ was recompensed.”

These words of the patriarch, whose hypocrisy had made the greatest part of the kingdom believe that he was very pious, filled the assembly with astonishment. There were very few present who were not convinced in their minds that Boris was one of the greatest villains in the Russian dominions, and that Job was not as great a hypocrite, and at the bottom of his heart perhaps as great a villain, as Boris; but there was no person present who had resolution enough to contradict the opinion of Job, knowing that their destruction would be the immediate consequence, if the others should not immediately accede to their opinion; they therefore all cried out, God bless the King, Boris Godunow.

Boris triumphed secretly; but he would make the assembly believe that he had modesty and virtue; he refused; he left the assembly and shut himself up in a convent, and gave out that he would turn Monk if they offered any violence to him, while, at the same time, his emissaries persuaded the people to present themselves at the convent, and upon their knees to beg of him to accept the crown.

Boris, who penetrated thus to the crown through a continued scene of infamy and bloodshed, supported himself on it for some time by those infernal arts which brought him to it. Under
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the government of a political tyrant, baseness and treachery generally become the distinguishing characteristics of the nation : all kinds of accusations, and even informations, were authorized and commanded among every order of men ; it was very common now to see one brother accuse another, and a son give information against his father.

In the midst of an assembly of judges at Moscow, who had sold themselves to infamy, they led a venerable old man, whose head was covered with white hair, and whose hands were loaded with heavy chains : he was accused of publishing some injurious stories against the czar ; he demanded his accuser, upon which his son appeared : filled with astonishment, this troubled parent, after a moment's silence recovering his senses, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and then let them fall on his unworthy son, he shook his irons, and said, " If thou hast not sold thyself to infamy, answer me, my son, if thou canst, or if thou darest." Although the whole assembly, at the head of which was Godunow, were abandoned to infamy, they were so astonished at beholding this scene, that they could not pronounce judgment, but ordered the accuser and the accused to retire.

That great Being who directs all human affairs, although he suffers such acts of inhumanity and barbarity to pass unpunished for some time, has told us that they shall meet their reward even in this world ; and if we look through the history of all nations, we shall always find his declarations verified.

About the year 1604, the time arrived when Godunow was to receive the reward for all the murders and scenes of infamy of which he had been the author. A bold, enterprizing, and ambitious

ambitious cheat was the person who appeared to chastize the villainy of the tyrant Boris: he was called Griscza Utrepiou, grandson of Gregory Utrepiou, a gentleman of the county of Alicia, and son of Bogdan Utrepiou; educated at Moscow, he distinguished himself in the schools, and was made deacon of Czudou. He was often at the house of the patriarch Job, who shewed him great civilities: the servants of the patriarch often heard him say, when he was speaking of the assassination of the young Demetrius, I shall one day be czar. These discourses were collected together, and came to the hearing of Godunow, who ordered Griscza to be arrested; but the impostor, as he was called, was advised of it, and saved himself in a convent of Novogorod, from which it would have been sacrilege for Godunow to have removed him by force.

When he relinquished this retreat, he left a writing in his chamber in the following words: "I am the czarowitz Demetrius, son of the czar Iwan! When I am seated upon the throne of my fathers I will generously repay you for the meat and drink that you have had the goodness to give me in this convent." Griscza was convinced, that after having published a thing of this kind there was no safety for him in Russia, and therefore he entered into Poland, and became a page of the court to prince Adam Wisnioweski, where he wrote the following letter, which was given to a clergyman while Griscza feigned himself sick: "He who at present does the offices of a page of the court to prince Adam, under the name of Griscza, is Demetrius, son of the great czar Iwan. My secretary Galkaloui, whom the Eternal gave me to preserve my life, kept me hid for a long time, fearing that the tyrant Boris should discover the place of my retreat, and then sent me into Poland: he was the

" son

“ son of a priest who was massacred at Uglitz, and not Demetrius.
 “ I have till now led a wandering and miserable life, from one
 “ scene of unhappiness to another, and at present I am reduced
 “ to the state of a servant. I hope that God will have pity
 “ upon my sufferings, and permit me to enjoy the rights of
 “ my ancestors, to which my birth gives me a just title: but
 “ if by the decrees of the Eternal I am condemned to die in
 “ the state that I am in, this letter will at least make it known
 “ who it is that, through a torrent of blood, is mounted upon
 “ the throne of the czars.”

The pretended secret being now divulged, they conducted Griscza to Warsaw, where, the diet being then assembled, they questioned him; and after the answers which he returned, they had no longer any doubt but that he was the true Demetrius.

The news of this extraordinary affair was soon spread into all parts. The Cossacks of the Ukraine, who were discontented with the government of Godunow, sent Griscza immediately a supply of money, and informed him that they had arms and men to succour him. The prince Adam promised to sacrifice all his fortune for him; so that he already acted the part of a king.

A Jesuit, who was an emissary of the court of Rome, insinuated himself into his familiarity, in hopes that if ever he ascended the throne of Russia, he might be able to re-unite the two separate churches. Griscza promised a great deal, but with the most politic restrictions; so that he was even too deep for the Jesuit, who thought himself much too shrewd for the supposed Demetrius, and brought him to engage that the whole Ignatian society

should support him. By the intrigues of the Jesuit he likewise flattered himself to obtain the princess Mary, daughter of Visnioveski, palatinate of Sendomir, in marriage, and even concluded a treaty with his future father-in-law, by which he obliged himself to marry his daughter when he mounted the throne, and also to introduce the Roman Catholic religion into Russia.

The prince Visnioveski levied troops, and entered Russia with Griscza, where he was joined by 8000 Cossacks, and the whole country declared for this supposed impostor. The army which Boris sent to oppose him was immediately defeated, the towns opened their gates to him, and he now saw but a little space interposing between him and the throne.

The reigning czar, who was hated by all his subjects, and haunted by a guilty conscience, instead of heading his army, and dying sword in hand, shut himself up in his palace, gave way to all the frightful ideas which his infamous conduct suggested to him, though the storm was ready to fall upon his head; and at last took a dose of poison, which put an end to his miserable life.

This blood-thirsty tyrant seems to have degenerated so far from the nature of a human being, that merit and virtue were always crimes in his estimation. With all his other vices, he was avaricious to the last degree, and employed every base and inhuman method to amass vast treasures; he was always surrounded with executioners, and no person was guarded against his infamous practices but those who were his associates; more-
over,

over, except the patriarch Job, there was not a greater hypocrite in all the Russian dominions.

Boris was no sooner dead, than his son Theodore was proclaimed czar of all the Russias, and the czarina, his mother, regent of the kingdom. The accomplices of the father were obliged to raise the son to the throne; and soon after to turn their attention towards Griscza, who made a great progress in the kingdom.

At that time the czar's army formed the siege of Krom, and the forces of Griscza took every method to preserve the town; so that the two armies came into fight of each other; when a general officer of Theodore's army, who was discontented with the behaviour of the court towards him, in the midst of his brother officers declared in favour of Griscza, gained all his comrades over to his party, and the soldiers followed the example of their officers; whereupon the two armies immediately united, and cried out, Long live the czar Demetrius.

As Griscza approached Moscow, his partizans hired three assassins, who butchered the emperor Theodore and his mother, and conducted the princess Theodora, his sister, to a convent: the people were made to believe that these unhappy victims, who now suffered for the husband's and the Father's wickedness, had poisoned themselves.

Griscza made his entry into the capital with great pomp, and nothing was heard but a repetition of the following words: "Long live Demetrius, who is the sun, and the bright star of the morning, which gives light to the Russian empire." He

was soon afterwards crowned, and seated upon the throne of Russia; but a moment might precipitate him again from his elevated state of grandeur, and disclose his imposture, if he could not procure the czarina Mary, the mother of Demetrius, to acknowledge him for her son: he was too good a politician to omit this part of the ceremony; he therefore sent for her to the convent where the tyrant Godunow had confined her, went out of Moscow to meet her, threw himself at her feet, and called her mother. But whether through fear, from a desire of vengeance, or as some have supposed from a real effort of maternal love, Mary threw herself into the arms of Griscza, and called him her dear son.

From this time there appeared no longer any doubt among the people, but that Griscza was the son of Iwan, and that Demetrius, saved from the hands of his assassins, was now the true czar of all the Russias.

No sooner was Griscza mounted upon the throne of Russia, and attempted to fulfil the engagements which he had made with the palatinate of Sendomir, than the Russian nobility entered into a conspiracy to dethrone him; they feigned, as it is said, at first to believe him to be the true Demetrius; but they soon afterwards changed their opinion, and regarded him as an impostor, who preferred the Poles to the Russians, the church of Rome to that of Greece, the Jesuits to the priests of this nation, and the daughter of the palatinate of Sendomir to all the beauties of Russia.

These complaints were soon spread abroad, and the people began to murmur: in this government, as in almost all despotic governments,

governments, there is only one step between the murmuring and the revolting of the people; the first audacious person will always find accomplices.

Basil Suiski, of the ancient family of Rurick, the first sovereign of Russia, in a few days assembled a great body of troops; but his intentions were discovered, and he was going to suffer the punishment which he merited, when Griscza pardoned him.

Though this czar had policy enough to make his way to the throne, he was so little acquainted with the character of his countrymen, that he could not support himself on it. To shew mercy to a Russian was just the same as if a man should attempt to caress a tyger, after he had given him a piece of raw flesh: as these people had no idea of gratitude, or of humanity; educated in all the ideas of servitude and barbarity, like slaves become masters, they thought themselves insulted when they received any mark of mercy or favour. This act of mercy was the cause of Griscza's destruction. Suiski, humbled and mortified to the last degree, repented that he had condescended to give his life to the czar; and as soon as ever he was discharged, began to renew his rebellion. "The czar, said he, is an impious person, who
"appears to make it a piece of luxury to eat veal, because it is
"forbidden by the laws of the church; and who will scarcely
"give himself the trouble to salute St. Nicholas." These were such terrible crimes in Russia, that nothing less than a torrent of blood could make an atonement of them.

The party of Suiski now became formidable, determined to strike a great blow on the last day of an entertainment which the

czar:

czar gave to all his court. The nobility, the people, and even the guards, were sunk into a most profound sleep, caused by the debauchery and riot in which they had lived for some days before, when the party of Suiski assembled in the great square at Moscow; from thence they divided themselves into the different quarters of the town, where they massacred all the Poles whom they met without distinction; whilst Suiski in the mean time, with the sabre in one hand, and a crucifix in the other, animated the assassins, by crying out, That the Poles had sworn to destroy all the Russians.

On hearing the cries of the dying, the czar awaked out of his sleep, but the gates of his palace were already forced, and his guards destroyed; to save himself he was obliged to leap out of a window; but he was soon taken by the party of Suiski, who loaded him with the most opprobrious language. The czar, as soon as he had recovered himself from the fright, began to expostulate with him in the following terms: " You know, said he, that I am your legal king, the son of Iwan the Fourth, and that I was crowned in the presence of the whole nobility of the kingdom, and if you will not believe me, call upon my mother, and she will tell you the truth."

On this, some of the least violent among them, went and brought the czarina Mary, who again informed them, that Griscza was her son, and the legal heir of the czars; but she had scarcely pronounced these words, when they began to strike him with their sabres, and in a few minutes he was cut in pieces before his supposed mother.

Thus

Thus fell the man, whose great talents brought him to the throne, and whose humane disposition, and want of proper precaution, precipitated him from it.

Mankind are greatly divided with regard to the origin of this extraordinary person; some assert positively that he was the real Demetrius, whilst others exhibit his history in the manner before related.

A sovereign who pardons a subject who is the author of a rebellion in a despotic government, and at the same time sets him at liberty, will always, sooner or later, feel the bad effects of his imprudence; because, as the same rebellious disposition still continues, he will now become more hardened, and carry on his rebellious designs with more precaution. If Griscza had shut up his enemy in a convent after he had pardoned him, and sent the principal of his associates into the remote parts of the empire, in all probability he and his descendants would have occupied the throne of Russia to this day; but by not taking this precaution, he has been the cause of all the scenes of barbarity and bloodshed which have since happened in that kingdom on account of the succession: for when once a people have been accustomed to embrace their hands in the blood of their legal sovereigns, the crown will always be the prey of the first bold and audacious villain who has intrigue and cunning enough to draw the deluded rabble into his measures. In a despotic government there is no barrier between the sovereign and the impetuosity of the people; who, upon the least murmur, turn their attacks upon the source of power.

This

This fact is strongly verified in the example of Suiski; who no sooner escaped out of the hands of the executioner, than he mounted the throne; and though he was covered with the blood of his legal sovereign, to whom he had sworn obedience, he was regarded by the deluded rabble as the deliverer of his country, and was immediately proclaimed czar.

He was the first sovereign of Russia who entered into a contract with his subjects before he was crowned. The oath which he took upon this occasion was conceived in the following terms: “ I swear to all the people of Russia, that I will not
“ condemn any person to be punished till after he has been judged
“ and convicted by the laws and by the senate; that the father
“ shall not be answerable for the faults of the son; and that I
“ will not take vengeance for any of the outrages that I have
“ received under the reign of Godunow.” After he had pronounced these words, he kissed the cross, and the patriarch immediately placed the crown upon his head.

No sooner had Basil Suiski mounted the throne, but he sent to Uglitz, took up the body of the real Demetrius, as he is said to be, and brought him in procession to Moscow; and though he had been buried seventeen years, the Russian authors assure us, that neither his body nor cloaths were in the least decayed; and that during his removal his relicks worked many miracles. The venerable patriarch of the Russian church established a festival of three days to his honour: the first, the day of his birth, the second, the day of his death, and the third, the day of his translation from Uglitz to Moscow: such were the barbarity, ignorance, and superstition of the Russians in those days.

Basil Suiski had scarcely finished these ceremonies, before a report was spread that Demetrius had not been assassinated, and that he kept himself concealed in some part of Russia. This report alone made several provinces revolt; and on the other hand, another impostor called Peter, who styled himself the son of the czar Theodore the First, excited a rebellion, but he was soon afterwards taken and hanged by the czar at Moscow.

Scarcely was this execution ended, before another appeared at Starodul, in Severia, who took the following method to gain credit among the people. Two men, who were unknown, appeared one day in the market-place, one under the name of Andrew Nogoy, and the other under that of Alexis Rukin, who gave himself out to be secretary to the former: these two men immediately spread a report that Demetrius was not dead, but would immediately appear, if he could find friends to undertake his defence. The people whom Rukin harangued in this manner, were extremely curious to be better informed, and pressed him to explain himself; but he said no more at that time. The magistrates, informed of this fact, sent and arrested Rukin, and after having received some blows of the knout, they drew from him the following declaration: "The person whom I
" have brought hither, and who has taken the name of Andrew
" Nogoy, is Demetrius himself." He had no sooner pronounced the name, than the whole town was filled with cries of joy; all the inhabitants assembled themselves together, and fell at the feet of this impostor. This was not in consequence of a political contrivance, but it was the effect of the love which the common people bore to the progeny of their master; and a certain proof of their ignorance and simplicity of manners. The people collected from all parts on hearing the magic sound

of Demetrius pronounced; they did not give themselves time to enquire whether this Demetrius were an impostor, or the real son of Iwan the Fourth; so that Nogoy very soon found himself at the head of a formidable army.

His successes were rapid, which is generally the case at the beginning of a revolution; and the number of his troops increased in proportion as he approached to Moscow: the czar already trembled upon the throne; and till now had kept the widow of Griscza, and the palatine of Sendomir her father, prisoners; but seeing this storm ready to break upon his head, he released them, and sent them back to Poland, hoping that this generous act would hinder the republic from declaring against him: but at the same time one of Nogoy's party informed him of this affair, and of the road which they had taken, on which Nogoy sent 2000 horse to stop the prisoners, and to conduct them to his camp; and at the same time let the widow of Griscza know, that if she would acknowledge him to be her husband, that she should be the partaker of his honours when he came to the throne, from which at that time he appeared to be not very distant.

The palatine's daughter was now extremely embarrassed; if she did not acknowledge Nogoy for her husband, she lost all hopes of a throne, and of revenging herself; but on the other hand, by confessing him to be Griscza, she abandoned herself to an unknown person, who, in all probability, would soon return to the mean situation from whence he sprung: however the ambition of her father decided in favour of Nogoy; she ran and threw herself into the arms of this impostor. This scene, which passed in the midst of a multitude of officers, deceived some, and fixed.

fixed others in the design which they had formed of continuing inviolably attached to Nogoy, whom they knew, notwithstanding all these tricks, not to be the real Demetrius.

The party of this impostor continued still to augment; and the earth, in most of the provinces of the empire, was stained with the blood of her citizens; the towns were pillaged alternately by the different parties, and many of them reduced to ashes. The Swedes sent an army to succour the czar Suiski, and the Poles took the party of Nogoy: the Russian empire, thus divided, appeared to be approaching to the state of total ruin.

In this extremity some of the nobility assembled themselves at Moscow, then closely besieged by the troops of Nogoy, and declared to the people that they detested the administration of Basil Suiski, who had been the cause of all the miseries which overwhelmed the empire; on which the crowd ran with great fury to the imperial palace, at the head of whom was the prince Iwanvorotinski, a very near relation of Basil's, dragged the czar and the czarina out by force, and brought them before the people: when they had taken this step, the nobility published an edict, which declared the throne to be vacant, and conducted Basil Suiski into the convent of Czeudou. When he was arrived there, the prior of the convent, according to the custom which generally obtained in the examination of those who wanted to lead a religious life, asked him, "What he would have?" I "will not have any thing here, said the czar." And, according to the regulations of their convent, they could not legally ask him any more questions.

Basil himself was one of the first who contributed to destroy all kinds of law and order in the empire, and now he felt the effects of his iniquity, though not so severely as he merited: however the prince Basil Tinfoekin, who was present, answered the prior for the czar, "And said, he sincerely wished to become a monk;" on which they immediately shaved Suiski, and made him take the dress of a monk. The same day they conducted the czarina into a convent of nuns, and forced her to take the vow.

After Suiski was deposed, the party of the nobility, fearing to fall under the efforts of the party of the impostor Nogoy, resolved to offer the crown to Uladiflas, son of Sigismond king of Poland, if this prince would consent to be rebaptized according to the rights of the Grecian Church. Sigismond received the ministers whom they deputed to make him this proposition with great satisfaction; but before he would determine this important negotiation, he sent the prince Soulgauski with a great body of troops into Poland; who, under pretence of succouring the town of Moscow, seized upon it; on which Sigismond, as soon as he received this news, declared to the ministers that he would permit his son to accept the crown of Russia, but he insisted, as the first proof of their submission, that they would open the gates of Smolensko, one of the strongest fortified towns in the empire, to his army, which he had besieged without any success for two years: to which the archbishop of Resan, who was at the head of this deputation, answered the king with great firmness, "When your son shall have been rebaptized at Moscow, when he shall have promised the Russians upon oath to govern them according to their laws and customs, and, in fact, when he shall be crowned, we will not only open to you the gates of
" Smolensko,

“ Smolensko, but also of all the towns of Russia, and immediately take an oath of fidelity to Uladislas. The Russians are ready to acknowledge your son for their sovereign, and you are still treating them as enemies; take care, prince, you are making war against your own son.”

Sigismund suspected the Russians of acting falsely, and was moreover jealous that they gave the preference to his son.

He was afraid of Basil Suiski, though he was become a monk, took him out of his convent, and conducted him into his camp. When this unhappy prince was presented to him, Sigismund was highly offended at his resolute appearance, and ordered him immediately to kneel down before him; whereupon Basil answered with great resolution; “ My unhappy situation will not make me forget that I am sovereign of all the Russias, and that I ought not to kneel before any mortal: it was not thy valour which made me thy slave, it was the perfidy of my subjects, and the will of the Eternal. In seeing me fallen to the state where I am, thou shouldst tremble for thy own safety, because thou hast never been in that elevated sphere in which I have been.”

Sigismund, who was as great a tyrant as his prisoner, and a much greater villain in many respects, had not a soul sufficiently great to admire the resolution and firmness of Basil; but sent him, with his wife and his brothers, into Poland; where all these illustrious captives died soon after by poison. The tyrant and murderer of Griscza, after the latter had pardoned him for his rebellion, now received the punishment due to his crimes. Sigismund ordered them to be buried near the high road, and in

the middle of their graves erected a column of marble, on which was written the following inscription: "Under this stone rests "Basil Suiski, emperor of Russia; his body lies among some of "his principal slaves."

There is no greater mark of a base, mean, and ungenerous soul, than that of insulting over the remains of the dead. Sigismond thought that Basil had behaved ill, and that he was little better than a barbarian; but the Russians had much greater reason to say that Sigismond, the king of a civilized nation, behaved in a base and shameful manner, and merited a more severe punishment than he had inflicted upon Basil, who, at least, had done him no wrong.

The Poles having gained a considerable party in Russia, attempted to write to Uladislas that he had only to present himself in Russia, and they would leave it to his choice, after his coronation, to accept or to refuse the conditions which had been proposed to him; but to render this writing authentic, the signature of the patriarch was necessary, which this prelate refused, and even threatened to excommunicate those who should sign such a letter. Sulkowski, a Polish officer, being present, fell into the greatest rage, drew his sword, and presented the point to the breast of the venerable patriarch; but, without shewing any mark of consternation, the latter drew out a crucifix which he carried under his robe, and presented it to the Pole, telling him at the same time, "To behold the arms he opposed to "his; strike me, says he, if thou darest, and I will curse thee "to all eternity." The Pole, transported with rage, attempted to pierce the patriarch, but the prince Mstilauski checked him, and informed him that such efforts of bravery were not properly directed,

directed, for that those who attempt to militate against the religion of a nation were generally in the wrong.

While the Poles were carrying fire and sword through several provinces of the Russian dominions, as well as in and about Moscow, under pretence of exterminating the party who were opposing their prince Uladislas, and another faction were supporting prince Philip of Sweden; another impostor exhibited himself under the name of Demetrius, so often usurped. This cheat called himself Matuiska, and had been a deacon. Several towns and provinces immediately declared in his favour; and in all probability he would soon have changed the face of affairs, if the governor of Plascou had not arrested him by a stratagem, and sent him bound to the camp which was before Moscow.

The Polish garrison, which was in the castle of Moscow, prescribed no bounds to their licentiousness; it would be horrible to recite all the cruel and barbarous enormities which they committed; and it is with pleasure we find the oppressed Russians soon after roused from their lethargy, pursuing these tyrants, attacking them in their fortresses, and forcing them to surrender at discretion, after having being obliged to eat their dogs and horses. The Poles, among ten thousand other acts of barbarity, set fire to the town of Moscow, in which at that time there were more than 180,000 houses, mostly built of wood, and massacred more than 10,000 of the inhabitants, who were endeavouring to save their families and their goods from the flames: this infernal act was projected with no other intention than to cause confusion among the people, that they might seize the opportunity of robbing the czar's palaces: but the greatest number of the Polish army was massacred, and the rest

rest sold for slaves into the different parts of the Russian dominions.

The king of Poland, who was advancing at the head of a great army to conquer the kingdom, and seize upon the crown by conquest, hearing of the fate of his troops, and of the degree of fury to which the Russians were raised, resolved to return into Poland, and wait a more favourable opportunity of carrying his great plan into execution.

Notwithstanding the barbarities which the Poles had committed about Moscow, and in other provinces of this empire, there was still a party among the Russians who supported the cause of Uladislas, to whom the crown had been offered; a second faction were inclined to favour prince Philip, the brother of Gustavus Adolphus; so that the pretended rights of these two powerful princes might again spread the fire of civil war in the kingdom: whilst a third party endeavoured to save their country.

These last assembled all the nobility and gentry of the kingdom, and represented to them the calamities they had suffered, and the dangers which even then threatened the state, if some remedy could not be found to prevent them: they immediately declared the throne vacant, and the election which had been made of Uladislas three years before to be null.

Russia, as has been always observed, was not an elective kingdom; but the race of their ancient sovereigns was extinct, and five czars, or pretenders, having perished in the late troubles, and almost brought the kingdom to its final ruin; there was therefore

therefore an absolute necessity for this election, to save the state from total destruction.

Some of the nobility proposed Michael Jædorowitz Romanow, son of Theodore Romanow, archbishop of Rostow, who was immediately elected, by the voices of the whole assembly being united in his favour. This young prince was only fifteen years old, and lived very quietly in a convent at Uglitz with his mother, whom the tyrant Boris Godunow had forced to take the religious order, whilst his father was at the same time obliged to enter into the sacred order. The news of his election gave him the greatest concern; and his mother even fell down on her knees before the deputies of the senate to desire them not to force her son from her, begging them with tears to proceed to some other choice. The fate of the preceding czars alarmed them; and it was not without the greatest efforts that she at last consented to the pressing solicitations of her brother the prince Scheremerow.

The archbishop, father of the new-elected czar, was at this time detained a prisoner in Poland by Sigismund; but as soon as the news of his son's election reached Warsaw, he was immediately set at liberty; and as the patriarch of Russia died some time after, he was nominated by his son to this illustrious place.

Before Michael Romanow was crowned, he was obliged to sign a kind of capitulation, by which he engaged to protect the Greek religion, to administer justice according to the laws of Russia, the principal of which have been before described, and not to make peace or war at his own arbitration. Four of the

principal nobility were named to form his council, by whose opinion he promised to govern till he came to a more advanced age.

Michael being now seated upon the throne, through the intercession of England and Holland, made a peace with Gustavus Adolphus king of Sweden, and ceded to him Kexholm, Notebourg (since called Schlusfelbourg) Iwanogorod, and Kopario, with their several districts, situated in Carelia and Ingria. By this treaty Sweden made a considerable barrier against Russia; but the Russians, at this time, were not informed enough of the value of what they lost, and of the ill consequences of losing all communication with the Baltic sea: the ministry of Moscow, who were not inspired with the genius of Peter the Great, nor with the knowledge of the true interests of the empire, contented themselves with the commerce which the English and Dutch carried on at Archangel.

No sooner was this peace concluded, and the czar had begun to establish order and tranquillity in his empire, than Uladislas, prince of Poland, entered Russia at the head of a great army, with an intention to support his ancient election. Great bodies of Cossacks pillaged and laid waste all the open country, while the regular troops penetrated even to Moscow, and laid siege to this capital: but Uladislas soon perceived, by the resistance which he met with every where, that the Russians were now roused from their lethargy; he therefore abandoned his project, and a peace was soon after concluded between the two nations, by which the Poles obtained the duchies of Smolensko, of Severia, and of Czerniechow; they restored all the rest of their conquests, and

and the king of Poland renounced for ever all his pretensions to the crown of Russia.

Michael Romanow, after having concluded this peace, reigned with great tranquillity, and made no changes in his kingdom which either prejudiced or advantaged the administration; happily for him, during his youthful days he was under the tuition of a very sensible and benevolent father, who watched over his interests, and, if I may be allowed the expression, trained him up regularly in the science of government, as far as it was then known in this country.

But that I may give my readers a proper idea of the intentions and conduct of this worthy man, I will insert the discourse that he addressed to his son when he was advanced to the dignity of patriarch: “When you mounted the throne, said he to his son, “the rights and authority which the laws of Russia gave me “over you, as being your father, became extinct; you are at “present my king, and I must obey you: however, I hope you “will permit me once more to speak to you as a father, and as “a tender father, who has your interest and welfare at heart. “When I learned in my prison that you had been proclaimed “czar, I regarded this event as the greatest unhappiness that “could befall my house; I thought the Eternal was irritated “against my family, and that he would destroy us totally from “the face of the earth; I regarded you as the last victim that he “would sacrifice to his vengeance: however, I was something “satisfied when I was informed, that it was by his divine will “that you were upon the throne, and that he had manifested “it to the metropolitan of Moscow. I now flatter myself, that “he will finish his work, that he will deliver you from your
“enemies,

“ enemies, and that he will make your reign prosperous. It is
“ with satisfaction that I see my hopes were well founded. The
“ Swedes and the Poles have laid down their arms, and the rebels
“ are returned to their duty; hence then, my son, it will be
“ your fault if you are not one of the most powerful princes
“ upon earth; therefore be a little upon your guard: the Russian
“ nation is naturally inconstant; you have had several recent
“ examples of it; and if they see the son seated upon the throne,
“ and the father at the head of the clergy, they will see too
“ much power united at once in the same house. If the people
“ should not regard such an event, they will soon be advised
“ of it by malicious and envious men, of whom there are
“ always a great number in every court: their eyes are fixed
“ upon you, therefore be upon your guard, as every one believes
“ that your elevation to the throne is an act of injustice done
“ to his right and to his merit. The dignity of patriarch is
“ desired, and even envied, by every one of those who are at
“ the head of the clergy; if you force me to take it, the house
“ of Romanow will be hated by all the nobility and the clergy.
“ Are you very sure that you will not see another impostor rise
“ up from among the dregs of the people, under the borrowed
“ name of Demetrius, and dispute the empire with you? then
“ your enemies will declare themselves, then they will lend
“ their arms to precipitate you from the throne. Do not
“ mistake me, my son, kings have rarely any sincere friends;
“ they are never pardoned for being raised so high above their
“ fellow-creatures; their actions are examined with the greatest
“ scrutiny, and they are generally found to be bad, because
“ they were determined to find them so. He who makes his
“ court to you to-day would not regard you to-morrow, if
“ you descended from the throne. Be always upon your guard
“ against

“ against flatterers; their praises are only addressed to your
“ power; they are so base, that they only study your foibles to
“ take advantage of them.” This worthy man would not have
yielded to the intreaties of his son, if the senate and the
clergy had not gone in a body, and intreated him to comply
with the united desires of the nation.

Nothing remarkable respecting the government of this empire
happened after this during the whole reign of Michael Roma-
now, who died in year 1645, and left the crown to his son
Alexis Michaelowitz, then only sixteen years of age, on whom
it devolved by hereditary right. The prince Boris Iwanowitz
Morosow, who had been his governor, fearing any new troubles
which might have been excited, convoked all the nobility who
were in and about Moscow the day after the death of Michael;
and, without waiting for the necessary preparations which were
formerly employed in respect to these ceremonies, he immediately
procured his pupil to be crowned. There were a number of
ceremonies used before this time at the coronation of a czar, but
they have since been entirely changed by Peter the Great.

Morosow having gained a certain empire over Alexis when
he was a child, continued the same over him afterwards when
he had him for his master. Attached in appearance to the young
czar, Morosow soon became his minister, and in a very able
manner dismissed all those persons from the court who were in
a situation to give him any umbrage; so that by his dexterity
and address he very soon held the reins of absolute power: the
people murmured, but the cries of the discontented did not come
to the ears of the emperor; all the persons who were about the
throne were devoted to the minister.

Alexis

Alexis followed the example of his ancestors, and chose himself a wife among the most amiable of his subjects ; he married Mary Ilychna, daughter of Ilia Miloslawski ; and in eight days afterwards Morosow had the ambition to marry her sister ; but alas ! he pushed his system a little too far upon this head ; he was old and full of infirmities ; his lady was young, lively, and handsome, and soon after formed an intrigue with a young Englishman, which Morosow discovered, but dared not attempt to punish the guilty person ; all he could do was to exile his rival from the court.

The tyranny however of Morosow over the Russians was almost without example ; he was absolutely master of the government, and might justly be compared to the grand vizir at Constantinople : all the people in place under the government were his creatures, and he rendered justice in what manner he thought proper. He loaded the people with new taxes, though, had he been a great politician, he would have concluded that to touch the property of a people in an absolute government is to excite them to a revolt. The minister laid a new tax upon salt, which drove the inhabitants of Moscow to desperation : they met in a body, and stopped the czar opposite to the palace as he was mounting his horse to attend a solemn procession, and intreated him to hear their just complaints against his ministers. Alexis, though surprized at this boldness, was not at all disconcerted, and informed the people that he would have the matter examined into, and that they should have justice done them : but, unhappily, some of the courtiers had the imprudence to force their horses among the people, when they were retiring very peaceably, and struck several of the citizens with their whips ; whereupon the populace became furious, took up stones, and

and threw them at the horsemen, on which the tumult became general; so that they followed the attendants of the czar into the palace, and it was with great difficulty that the guards could check the impetuosity of the multitude, who now loudly demanded the head of Morosow, as well as the heads of those who by his orders tyrannized over the people. His house was immediately pillaged and set on fire, and the houses of several of his partizans were also rifled. The chancellor Narari Iwanowitz Tzistou was massacred; and the czar was obliged to abandon Plescow and Trachanestow to the rage of the people to save his governor Morosow. The humility which Alexis shewed on this occasion, the zealous interest which he appeared to take for the life of the minister, whose faults he did not endeavour to hide, the promises which he made to reform the abuses, to diminish the taxes, and in future to have a watchful eye over every part of the administration, and the good nature with which he promised upon his honour that Morosow should behave better for the future, affected the populace at length to such a degree, that they burst into tears, and cried out, "That the will of God and of the czar should be done." Every thing was immediately quieted. Soon after Morosow appeared in the train of his master, who went in procession to the convent of Troitza; when his humble air, and his honest and obliging behaviour, made the people forget every thing that had passed.

The danger which he had just escaped was an instructive lesson to him, of which he made a good use, for from that time he administered justice to every person with the most scrupulous exactness: the people were no more loaded with taxes; the rich were no longer suffered to oppress the poor, nor the nobility to insult the common people: the czar moreover immediately
published

published an edict which contained in substance the following laudable regulation: "That when any nobleman shall commit
" a crime, all his family shall be regarded, in some measure, as
" being culpable, for not having watched over his conduct;
" and if the crime shall be capital, the relations of the criminal
" shall lose twelve degrees, or quarters, of their nobility."—In any other country this would have been regarded as a most barbarous and tyrannical law, but in Russia, where all the nobility are and have always been tyrants, it was at that time very just and reasonable; for their honour and interest compelled the individuals of a family to watch over the conduct of each other.

The reign of Alexis was much troubled by seditions, and by intestine as well as by foreign wars. A chief of the Cossacks, who lived upon the banks of the Tanais, intended to make himself king of Astracan, and for a long time spread terror in all the neighbouring country; but at last he was taken prisoner, and finished his life upon a scaffold: the Russians say that more than 10,000 of his partizans were hanged in the high roads of the kingdom of Astracan. But this is a part of the world where the people, having no ideas of the moral virtues, are not restrained and governed by ethics, and much less so by such severe punishments; which seldom produce any other effects than rendering the people more barbarous, and inspiring them with a secret desire of vengeance.

In the year 1649, the death of Uladisslas king of Poland rendering the throne vacant, Alexis informed the diet, who were then assembled for the election of a new king, that he would enter Poland at the head of 20,000 men, if he was not elected king: but his menaces made very little impression upon the
6 Poles,

Poles, who were extremely afraid that their nation would become a province of Russia; they therefore amused Alexis for some time by vague promises, and placed John Casimir upon the throne, who had been a jesuit and cardinal. Enraged that the Poles had refused him to be their sovereign, Alexis resolved to revenge himself by arms, and immediately entering Poland at the head of a large army, very soon conquered Smolensko, Kiovia, and all the Ukraine, which were ceded to him by a peace: but he was not so successful against the Swedes, who constantly gained ground upon him.

The Turks were at that time very formidable: the grand visir entered Poland at the head of a powerful army, and likewise threatened the Russian dominions: they took Kaminiek, and all the Polish provinces bordering on it. The Cossacks of the Ukraine, who would never have any master, now saw themselves surrounded with Turkish, Russian, and Polish armies, so that they knew not to which of these three powers they ought to submit.

The Sultan Mahomet the Fourth, who had vanquished the Poles, and made them his tributaries, demanded, with all the pride of an Ottoman conqueror, that the czar should immediately cede the Ukraine to him, which was refused with the same degree of haughtiness: these sovereigns did not even study to keep up the external appearance of decency. The sultan in his letter gave Alexis no other title than that of hospodar of the Christians, and called himself his most glorious majesty, king of all the universe; to which the czar answered, That he had never been taught to submit to a Mahometan dog, and that his scimeter was equal to the sabre of the sultan.

The Turks however now threatened to subdue all Poland which had refused to pay them the tribute. The czar Alexis succoured them on the Dnieper; and John Sobieski, general of the crown, retrieved the honour of his country by the celebrated battle of Choczim, which opened the way for him to the throne. However he met with a powerful opponent in the czar Alexis, who put his son upon the list of candidates, and proposed to unite Poland to his own empire: he made very large offers to the diet; but the greater they were, the less they were accepted. The Russian authors say, that he was worthy of this new kingdom by the manner in which he governed his own.

After the sedition of Moscow, he caused justice to be administered with great impartiality in all his dominions; he introduced the manufactures of silk and of linen into his kingdom; he peopled the almost desert country upon the banks of the Wolga and of the Kama with Lithuanian families, and with Poles and Tartars, who were taken in the war: before his time all the prisoners were slaves to those to whose lot they fell in dividing the spoil: Alexis, on the contrary, gave them their liberty, and land to cultivate. He endeavoured as much as possible to introduce military discipline in his army; but the Russians were not yet sufficiently prepared for this great change, which was effected by his son Peter the Great. He was carried off by an acute disease in the year 1677, in the forty-sixth year of his age, and left his crown to his son Theodore Alexiowitz.

The czar Alexis was humane and good-natured; and though he was sometimes hasty and passionate, his good sense generally engaged him to make reparation for any injustice or severity which he might have occasioned in the first transports of passion.

He

He never signed any sentence of death but with reluctance; and the frequent executions which drenched the scaffolds in blood during his reign, should rather be attributed to the ferocity and barbarous character of the Russians, than to the natural severity of the czar: in fact, all the authors who have given the character of the czar Alexis, concur in saying that he was a good husband, a good father, a good friend, and worthy of the throne which he occupied.

When Theodore mounted the throne, he was not quite sixteen years of age, but the czar had the precaution the preceding year to nominate him to be his successor, and to announce him in this capacity to all the states of Europe.

This prince, who had a tender and delicate constitution, shewed a greatness of soul that was capable of forming and executing the boldest projects. All the family of Romanow were desirous of making a reformation in this kingdom, and of polishing the Russians; Theodore was very desirous of carrying this great plan into execution; but he was not sufficiently qualified to attempt this general and necessary reform.

Alexis had made peace with Sweden, with Poland, and with the Turks, and his son ratified the treaties, so that he had only a trifling war to support against the Kan of the Crim Tartars who invaded the Russian dominions several times, but was always repulsed with loss. Fixed on his throne, and now at peace with all his neighbours, the czar Theodore directed his attention towards polishing his people, and embellishing his country: he convened a general assembly of all the first class of the nobility of the empire; and, after having ordered them to

produce their titles of nobility, he threw them into the fire, telling them that in future he should only regard those as noble who distinguished themselves by their merit. This act of authority has been regarded by many as praise-worthy, considering the state of the Russians at that time ; but I can by no means regard it in this light ; it certainly broke down that barrier, which, even in an arbitrary government, should always subsist between the people and the throne ; and which, in a state already civilized, would have overturned the whole system of government.

This czar, it is certain, introduced several useful regulations in his dominions, particularly the building of houses with stone, which before were only constructed with wood, and the establishing a night watch in all the great towns in Russia ; he likewise introduced several general as well as useful regulations in the police ; but after a reign of six years he was carried off by a lingering disorder, which many attributed to poison : it is certain that the measures he employed to reform the nobility rendered the greatest part of them his enemies : the Russians feel the effects of them to this day, as there are no regular titles of honour at present in Russia, but those which are gained by military rank ; so that a great civil officer is not regarded, if he has not the rank of general or field marshal.

When Theodore found himself drawing near his end, he named his younger brother Peter to be his successor, in prejudice to his next brother John, who was so disfigured by nature, that he was incapable of reigning. The vivacity and strong constitution of Peter, who was only ten years old at this time, procured him the crown, which John, who was almost a spectacle of deformity, could not obtain.

Soon

Soon after the death of Theodore the senators assembled and proclaimed Peter czar of all the Russias. This ceremony was regarded as the signal of a most horrible sedition. The princess Sophia, sister of Peter and John, who had an ambition and a boldness beyond all expression, no sooner heard of Peter's advancement to the throne, than she fell into the greatest rage; she governed her eldest brother John, and hoped during his reign to hold the reins of government; she therefore began clandestinely to tempt the fidelity of the Strelitzs, a turbulent body of troops, who in those days occupied the same post in Russia, as the Janissaries have always done in the Turkish dominions; this seditious corps seconded the furious ambition of Sophia with the greatest alacrity.

Two days after the czar Theodore was buried, they took up arms, and ran seditiously to the imperial palace, where they complained that their colonels had retained their pay: the minister dismissed the colonels from the imperial service, and paid the Strelitzs the money they demanded. But these barbarians, excited by Sophia, seeing the weakness of the government, became still more enterprising, and insisted that the court should give them up their officers; the ministers were obliged now to comply with their demands, and these unfortunate officers were condemned to undergo the discipline of the battocks, which was to receive a certain number of lashes by the common executioners. During this interval, Sophia assembled at her house all the princesses of the imperial Family, the principal of the nobility, the patriarch, the bishops, and the principal merchants, where she painted in the blackest colours the injustice which was done to her brother Iwan or John by excluding him from the empire, notwithstanding his birth-right. As soon also as the assembly was

was dispersed, she immediately promised the Strelitzs an augmentation of their pay and presents; while at the same time her accomplices excited this seditious soldiery against several of the principal nobility, whom she imagined would oppose her designs. Some were accused of one misdemeanor, and some of another, so that at length there was a list of more than forty persons who were to be massacred and cut in pieces; and after having glutted themselves with the blood of these unhappy persons, not one of whom escaped, as they guarded the gates, and threatened to set fire to the town if any one of them was secreted, and eluded their fury; I say, after this horrid carnage was finished, the Strelitzs proclaimed the princes Iwan and Peter joint czars, and associated their sister Sophia with them as co-regent.

Without being declared czarina, Sophia, in fact, mounted the throne; as all the power of the state now centered in her, she began the exercise of her authority by publishing an edict, which indemnified all those who had been concerned in the massacre above-mentioned, which approved their conduct, and which recompensed them by the confiscation of the estates of all who had been massacred: Sophia likewise publicly thanked the murderers for the barbarous zeal which they had shewn, and raised a monument in Moscow, on which was engraved the names of these unhappy victims, to perpetuate the memory of this horrible event. The nobility who had saved the czars from the beginning of these seditions, in the strong convent of the Trinity, about twelve leagues from Moscow, by the solicitation of the people, and the consent of Sophia, now brought them back again to the capital.

Chief

Chief of the council, and co-regent of the kingdom, Sophia now dictated all the laws and orders of the state, and signed all the edicts. This ambitious and politic woman, who had an active, penetrating, and elevated genius, kept all the nobility in awe, and made herself beloved by the people: her beauty inclined every body to favour her; her eloquence was persuasive, and her resolution imposed upon the boldest and most audacious persons. The great desire she had to reign, made her barbarous and cruel towards all whom she imagined would oppose her in her designs, and made her conceive an implacable hatred against her brother Peter, whom she would likewise have destroyed, if she could have effected this without kindling a rebellion in the state. Her intrigues with the prince Basil Galitzin, and afterwards with the secretary Scheglowitow, were known to the principal part of the nation; so that to the greatest ambition and passion for governing, Sophia joined all the weaknesses and sensibility of an amiable woman.

Galitzin no sooner became the favourite of the co-regent, than he saw himself invested with the chief command of the troops, and with the offices of administrator of the empire, and of keeper of the seals. Having a genius superior to all the Russian nobility of his time, this great minister applied himself to make a reform in the discipline and regulations of the troops: he sent a great part of the corps of the Strelitzs, who were now become dangerous even to those who employed them, into the Ukraine, into Kafan, and into Siberia, and for some time every thing was conducted in peace and tranquillity.

The following year 1684, Sophia married the czar Iwan to the daughter of Soltikoff, governor of the town of Jenisefskoi in Siberia.

Siberia : but she left her younger brother Peter surrounded with a troop of flatterers, who drew him into all kinds of excess and debauchery, calculated to ruin his health, and injure his understanding.

One officer only who was about the person of the young czar, overturned all the projects of the co-regent. Lefort, a native of Geneva, and an experienced officer, insinuated himself into the good graces of the czar Peter, and often drew him from the dangerous scenes of debauchery into which he was plunged : he gave him the first lessons of the military art.

While the court of Moscow gave themselves up to the amusements and ceremonies which were the consequences of the marriage of the czar Iwan, the Strelitzs excited a new sedition ; and, to the astonishment of all mankind, religion was the motive. A man called Abokam, an archdeacon, who had before published a new species of doctrine in Moscow, proving the equality of the first Christians, which was founded upon the words of Jesus Christ, who says, " That one of you shall not " be greater than another," now renewed this dispute, and was joined by another called Raspod, whose ignorance could not be equalled but by his enthusiasm. These two men put themselves at the head of several fanatics, who were soon afterwards joined by many of the citizens and by several of the Strelitzs.

These sectaries, when they found their party considerably increased, entered into the cathedral, while the patriarch and his clergy were officiating, and drove them out of the church, ill treating those who made any resistance, and arranged themselves in their places, to receive the Holy Spirit. Sophia, hearing

ing of this tumult, sent immediately to the rest of the Strelitzs that the czars and the church were in danger. On this the other party of this seditious militia, joined by the rest of the citizens who were in the patriarchal interest, flew immediately to the church, and fell upon these unhappy fanatics, who defended themselves with great bravery; and had it not been that a person among the crowd cried out, that it was necessary that a council should be held, the cathedral would have been filled with blood and dead bodies: in consequence of this, a council was immediately held in the great hall of the palace, where the patriarch and another Bishop disputed against Raspod and his companion; but on pronouncing the second syllogism, they threw stones in the patriarch's face. The council finished with the execution of Raspod and several of his companions, the order for which was the only one that was signed by the three sovereigns, Sophia, Iwan, and Peter.

During this confusion, there was one of the nobility called Kovanfki, who was at the head of the Strelitzs, and who had contributed much to the elevation of the princess Sophia, and as a reward for his services demanded a part in the administration of the public affairs; but finding himself despised by Galitzin, who in fact was now master of the government, he seized this moment of trouble and confusion to revenge himself by feigning a devotion, and expressing a desire to support the persecuted Raspodites; under the cloak therefore of a hypocritical zeal, he raised a new rebellion of the Strelitzs, and of a great number of the enthusiastical Raspodites, which threatened more danger to the state, than the fanatic zeal of Raspod and his adherents.

An ambitious hypocrite is much more dangerous than a simple enthusiast: Kovanfki was determined to seize upon the government; and, that he might have nothing afterwards to oppose his designs, he resolved to massacre the two czars and Sophia, with all the rest of the royal family, together with Galitzin, and such of the nobility as he had most reason to fear. The czars and the princesses, and all who were attached to their interest were obliged immediately, on hearing this revolt, to retire to the convent of the Trinity, which was surrounded with a strong fortification, where they found themselves secure, not only on account of the respect which was always shewn to this holy place, but also because it was capable of sustaining a siege of six months. Sophia attempted to enter into a negotiation with the rebel Kovanfki, and proposed to meet him half-way for this purpose; as he knew therefore all her secrets, and supposed that he had nothing to risk from this interview, he accepted the proposition; but before he arrived at the place appointed, he found himself surrounded by a body of troops, and both he and his son, and thirty-seven Strelitzs who were his guards, were immediately beheaded without any ceremony. This distinguished stroke of policy, as it was deemed, very far from calming the troubles of the state, opened the door to a civil war. The whole body of the Strelitzs armed themselves immediately, and threatened to set fire to the convent of the Trinity: all the nobility and gentry armed their vassals, and flew to defend their princes: bodies of troops arrived from all parts, and every thing seemed to menace a bloody civil war. On this occasion the patriarch entered into the camp of the Strelitzs, and endeavoured to make them remember what they owed to God, to their king, and to their country; but this seditious corps were less intimidated by this discourse, than by the great bodies of troops which they saw arrive

arrive from all parts, which made them abandon their former resolutions; their fury changed into fear, and from thence into the blindest submission; in fact, they surrendered at discretion, and with cords about their necks they were led in procession to the convent of the Trinity, where they cried out, "We present our heads to our sovereigns, the czars are masters of our lives:" but they were all pardoned. However, to punish this seditious body still more, Galitzin dispersed them into the different provinces of the empire, and placed Jekelawitz, a man who was entirely dependent upon him, at their head: moreover this artful and able minister had at different times displaced all the friends and relations of the czar Peter by his mother's side, and now made great preparations for the revolution which Sophia and himself for some time before had resolved to effect.

In the year 1686 and 1687, Russia engaged herself in the alliance which the emperor Leopold formed against the Turks, by the advantageous offer which John Sobieski king of Poland made her, to abandon to her all his pretensions upon the Ukraine, and upon Smolensko, and agreed to carry the war into the Crim. On this occasion Boris Galitzin, a relation of the minister, and his enemy, seized an opportunity to separate the favourite from the co-regent: he had suspicions of the design this ambitious favourite had to marry Sophia, and he foresaw the consequences which this union would produce. Attached to the czar Peter, of whom he was governor, he named his cousin Basil general of the army which was to be sent against the Crim Tartars. Either from vanity or necessity, Sophia consented to the departure of her favourite minister; who being obliged to march his army through a country which was almost a desert, and not having

formed any magazines, found himself greatly embarrassed, lost a great number of his troops, and returned to Moscow in great disgrace. Samoclewitz, hetman of the Cossacks, was accused of holding a correspondence with the enemy, and fell a sacrifice for Galitzin's faults.

The following year this general, who was desirous of re-establishing his reputation, marched again into the Crim with a new army; but an army without any discipline or regularity; so that this expedition did not succeed any better than the former. The Kan, informed that the Russians intended to besiege his capital, threw a numerous garrison into it, who were well provided with every thing, and then marched out at the head of 30,000 men, and attacked the Russian army with great impetuosity. The Russians, though they advanced in very good order, lost a great number of men, and could gain no advantage over the enemy; and as the general had now expended all his provisions, and had no hopes of taking the Kan's capital, he returned into Russia, after having employed 30,000 men to build a town upon the river Samare, to serve as a magazine for the following year. This town, it is true, was only built of wood, and surrounded with ramparts of earth, but it was well provided with artillery, and was in a state of defence.

During the absence of the minister Galitzin, and against the consent of his sister Sophia, the czar Peter married Eudovia Joederowna Lapukin, daughter of Joedor Abramowitz, one of the most ancient families in Russia: he received the general on his return with all the indignation which he supposed his conduct merited. Galitzin was so much the more humbled by this bad reception which he met with, as he had no excuse to make to palliate his faults; however he ran immediately to Sophia to

give her an account of the ignominious treatment which he imagined he had received; and from this moment the destruction of the czar Peter was determined upon. Jekelawitz, chief of the Strelitzs, who owed all his fortune to Sophia and her favourite, charged himself with the execution of their will: he corrupted 600 foldiers, and conducted them to the castle of Obroksenko, where the czar was asleep; he presented himself under pretence of relieving the czar's guard, but he was refused; two Strelitzs, who were scandalized at the crime of which they were to be made accomplices, came during the night and informed the czar of the danger which threatened him. Jekelawitz retired with the remorse of having attempted such an odious project; and with the fear of being immediately punished.

The czar Peter escaped from this danger, retired again to the convent of the Trinity, with his mother, his wife, and all his faithful friends; from whence he sent letters to all the nobility, the senators, and to those of the Strelitzs who were not of the conspiracy against his person. A council was immediately assembled, and orders were dispatched to all the governors of the provinces to send troops to his assistance with the greatest expedition. Sophia and Galitzin attempted in vain to exculpate themselves from the projected assassination, but the proofs were too clear: the chief of the Strelitzs was put to the torture, and confessed every thing; the other accomplices had part of their tongues cut off, and were sent into Siberia; Sophia was shut up in the convent of Dewitz, which she had built herself in the neighbourhood of Moscow; and Galitzin, with his sons and his nearest relations, were exiled to Kargapol; the treasures of the former, which were immense, were confiscated; and from this moment

moment Peter found his legal authority established, and he began to reign.

About this time the Russians made a treaty with the Chinese : they had conquered the province of Dauria, which is situated between Siberia and Great Tartary, in the 130th degree of longitude, and in fifty-two degrees of latitude, where they had built the town of Albazin ; but the Chinese had reconquered it in the year 1684. The plenipotentiaries of the two empires held a congress in the neighbourhood of Nerfchinskoi under tents ; where it was agreed that in future the river Gorbitza, which falls into the Silka, should be the boundary of the Russian empire towards the north-east, and towards the east the river Amur should separate the two empires. Moreover a free commerce was likewise declared between the two nations by the same treaty. Two jesuits were the mediators of this peace, which the ministers of the two powers swore to observe in the following terms, in their respective languages : “ If any one shall hereafter think
“ or endeavour secretly to rekindle or to blow up the fire of
“ war, we pray the great God, who is Sovereign of all things,
“ and who knows the secrets of all hearts, to punish such
“ a traitor by a sudden death.”

The articles of this treaty were engraven upon two tables of marble, which were set up in the places that were to serve for the boundaries of the two empires.

No sooner had the czar Peter established tranquillity in his states, than he directed his thoughts towards carrying into execution what his ancestors, of the Romanow family, had projected ; namely, the reforming the Russian nation, and drawing the inhabitants

habitants out of that state of barbarity into which they were plunged. He gave great encouragement to foreigners who had abilities to come and settle in his dominions; he permitted the young Russian nobility to travel, and to instruct themselves in the manners and customs of foreign nations, which they were not suffered to do before; and he published several new edicts, which tended to soften the barbarous manners of the Russians.

Lefort, the Swiss officer beforementioned, who had now gained the confidence of the czar, obtained leave to raise a company of fifty men, who were chiefly the cadets of the principal nobility, to learn the military discipline; in which company the czar himself was inrolled as a drummer; and this was the first regular effort which was made in Russia to establish that discipline among the troops, for which they are at present so famous. Soon after the czar gave commissions to some German, English, and Dutch officers, to pursue the same plan; and as these companies improved themselves in their exercises, they were increased; so that the regiment of Lefort was at length augmented to twelve battalions.

Peter at the same time established new orders and regulations in the administration of the finances: the abuses which were made in the collection of the taxes were severely punished. Great encouragement was given for building houses with stones; and an absolute order published against building them with wood in the great towns, except under certain conditions. Great numbers of foreign artisans and men of learning were called into the empire, and the arts and sciences were honoured, protected, and recompensed.

As

As soon as the princess Sophia and her favourite had abandoned the government, the family of the Nariskins began to gain credit at court, and in a very little time forced Boris Galitzin, the ancient and sagacious governor of the czar Peter, to quit his place of prime minister, which was occupied by Leon Kintowitz Nariskin, who had so strongly imbibed the ancient prejudices of the nation, that he resolved to perpetuate their ignorance, and to change the whole face of the government: he began by abolishing the colleges which Boris his predecessor had established; he attempted to destroy the fine library which Boris had founded, and to burn the books which had been collected; but this was done without the knowledge or consent of the czar, who, when he perceived what his minister designed, gave him an express order to leave every thing in the situation in which his predecessor had left it, and not to introduce any change, or establish any thing new in the empire without his consent.

The Turks were at this time formidable to all the Christian powers, and till now they had treated all the sovereigns of Europe in such an arrogant manner, that it was not possible to have any solid peace with them: the emperor Leopold, who supported a war against the Ottoman Porte, seeing himself so ill seconded by the Poles his allies, always jealous of the conduct of the Russians their neighbours, sent an ambassador to Peter, to engage him to take up arms against the Tartars, from whom the Turks received a powerful support. Peter readily embraced this alliance, not only with a view to exercise his troops, who were now instructing themselves in the military arts, but also to endeavour if possible to gain the empire of the Black sea. Asoph, a strong town, situated upon an eminence

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at the mouth of the river Don, in Little Tartary, was the place which he resolved to attack first. General Gordon, with his regiment of 5000 men, who were chiefly Germans, was followed by general Lefort with his regiment of 12,000, who marched along upon the borders of the Don towards Asoph : Sczemeretoff took the same route with the whole body of the Strelitzs and a large corps of Cofacks; and general Shein, an experienced Prussian officer, conducted a great train of artillery.

The czar Peter served in this army in quality of lieutenant-colonel of a regiment; but the whole was under the orders of field-marshal Sczemeretoff. They soon made themselves masters of several fortresses upon the banks of the river, and at length laid siege in form to the town of Asoph. The garrison, which was numerous and well supplied, defended themselves with vigour; and as one side of the town was open to the sea, the Tartars continually supplied them with every thing they wanted. The Russians wanted ships to prevent these succours from being constantly thrown into the town: but what contributed more than all to hurt the Russians, and to render the siege difficult, was a lieutenant of their artillery, who had been condemned by general Shein, his commanding officer, to receive the knout for a trifling offence which he had committed, who in revenge of this indignity nailed up the greatest part of the Russian cannon, and threw himself into the town, where he embraced the Mahometan religion, and gave great spirits and activity to the besieged: in fact, this accident forced the czar to raise the siege of Asoph, after having lost a great number of men.

The most trifling fault was punished in these days with great rigour: the Russians, notwithstanding their seditious disposition,

submitted to it, and after having been severely chastised they served again as before; but this lieutenant of artillery, who was a stranger, thought otherwise, and severely revenged himself upon those who had tyrannized, as he thought, over him. Certain it is, that the humanity which they use in some part of the Russian dominions at present is far preferable to the severities which they formerly employed, and better calculated to retain men in their duty who have enjoyed any education, or who have any sentiments of honour. Some degree of rigour was necessary in those days to keep the common people in order, because they had no other ideas than those of slavery, and of acts of violence. But since the manners even of the common people, in some parts of the Russian dominions, have changed, the empress Elizabeth endeavoured to do by her clemency what her father did by laws; indeed she prosecuted this point so far, that there is not an example to be met with of the like nature in any country: when she came to the throne, she promised that no person should be punished with death during her reign, and she kept her promise. Those who were found guilty of crimes during her reign, were condemned to labour in the mines or upon the public works, so that their punishments might be of some utility to the community: an institution which was worthy of the most civilized state. In almost every other part of Europe all who are found guilty of capital crimes are put to death; but others are not by this means deterred from committing the like offences, though the execution is attended with the greatest tortures. The terrors of death make a much less impression upon such criminals than the dread of punishment, and of hard labour which they are to suffer every day.

After

After he returned from the siege of Asoph, in the year 1695, the czar, pressed by the insinuations of Mentzikoff, who, from selling tarts and fruit in the streets, was become his favourite and confident, resolved to separate himself from the czarina Eudocia Lapukin, and to send her to the convent of Sutalski. This princess was jealous of the favourite, whom she despised, and was determined to ruin him; and Mentzikoff, who was now every thing with the czar, was resolved at all events to get her exiled; especially as he perceived she was secretly doing every thing to counteract the reformation which the czar was effecting in his dominions.

Notwithstanding the ill success of the former campaign, the czar was resolved to take Asoph: he saw wherein he had failed in his first attempt, and immediately prepared a little fleet to shut up the harbour, and to cut off all communication between the Tartars and the besieged. Several German and Dutch engineers entered into the Russian service, and taught this people the principles of attacking and defending fortresses in a regular manner, with which they were before utterly unacquainted.

A determined resolution to push every enterprize to the last extremity, was no small part of Peter's character. Early in the year 1696, he brought a still greater army before Asoph.

His brother Iwan died this year, and left him absolute master of the government. The household expences of this prince, after his death, were applied towards the support of the army, which was some succour at this time, when the revenues of the state were very inconsiderable to what they are at present.

Peter received a great number of mariners from Holland, England, and Denmark, and took a great body of Kalmouks into his pay, whose horses were very useful against those of the Crim Tartars : but what gave Peter the greatest hopes of success was his little fleet, which consisted of several small ships of war, of three and thirty galleys, and of four fire-ships. The Russians were astonished at beholding such a fleet ; before this time they had not any idea of navigation. The general Lefort was now styled great admiral ; and the czar himself served as a volunteer in one of his own ships.

As soon as the Russians had again opened the trenches before Asoph, the Turks sent some transports laden with provisions, and conducted by a small naval force, into the port of Asoph for the use of the garrison, but they were intercepted by the Russians, and after some little resistance were all taken. Astonished at this event, the Turks, supposing that the Russians could not bring any such force to sea, retired and left the Russian admiral master of the harbour. The siege was carried on regularly by trenches ; and though the Turks and the Tartars made some powerful efforts to save this important fortress, they were always repulsed by the Russian and Kalmouk cavalry, and the fortress was obliged to surrender the 28th of July, on condition that the soldiers and the inhabitants should be transported to Caffa. The lieutenant of the artillery, who had defended the town which he formerly attacked, was, by this capitulation, obliged to be delivered up to his enemies.

The czar was too well acquainted with the importance of [Asoph not to fortify it immediately in the most regular manner, to cover it with forts, and to cut down some parts of the land
to

to make the harbour capable of containing the largest vessels. Orders were immediately given for carrying all these things into execution, and, if possible, to make the place impregnable.

On the other hand, the czar, who owed all the success of this expedition to his new marine, determined to put it on a respectable footing. A port was soon constructed that was capable of containing 200 ships; and he now bent his thoughts upon making himself master of the straits of Caffa, which opened the communication with the Euxine sea. He left thirty-two saikes before Asoph, and made the greatest preparations to build nine ships of sixty guns each, and forty frigates of fifty, forty, and thirty guns. He demanded of the principal nobility, of the richest merchants, and even of the patriarch, bishops, and clergy, contributions to equip this armament, for the honour of their country and for the advantage of Christianity.

The Ottoman Porte was greatly alarmed at receiving intelligence of this armament, the first that was ever attempted by the Russians in this or in any other part of their dominions. The Cossacks likewise had orders to build some light vessels, to which they had been accustomed, to cruise round the Crim, and to cut off all communication between the Turks and the Tartars of this country; as the czar's project was to expel the Turks and the Tartars from the Crim, and afterwards to establish through this channel, and through Georgia, a free commerce with Persia.

Emulation and the love of glory are certainly incentives to virtue and grandeur; the czar felt the truth of this, and resolved to give his subjects the pompous spectacle of a triumph, in imitation

imitation of those which were formerly exhibited at Rome. Triumphant arches were raised in Moscow, and the victors of Asoph, generals, officers, and soldiers, entered the capital with crowns on their heads, accompanied with bands of martial musick that chanted the praises of the heroes; the czar, who was among the crowd in the rank of a subaltern marine officer, modestly enjoying the praises of his victory. The soldiers who had fought upon the Venetian saikes against the Turks, and who formed a separate corps, marched the first. The marshal Sczemeretoff, the generals Gordon and Shein, the admiral Lefort, and the other general officers, preceded the czar in this pompous shew, who declared that he had not yet any distinguished rank in the army, and, by his example, would make all the Russian nobility perceive that they must merit the military ranks before they could enjoy them. The principal prisoners who were taken during this campaign marched two and two, and the procession was closed by the lieutenant of artillery who had turned traitor, who was whipped by two executioners upon the cart in which he was drawn, and afterwards broke upon the wheel.

To perpetuate the memory of this great event they struck a medal in Russia, the first that was ever stricken in this country; the Russian legend is very remarkable: "Peter the First, Emperor of Russia, always august." Upon the reverse is the town of Asoph, with these words, "Vanquished by Fire and by Water."

The czar, who was a true patriot, though his arms were crowned with success, was afflicted to see that his ships and gallies were built by the hands of strangers; and he had no less desire to have a port in the Baltic than in the Black sea. In the
year

year 1697, he sent sixty young Russians of Lefort's regiment into the different parts of Italy to learn the marine arts and the construction of gallies; and at the same time he sent forty others into England and Holland to inform themselves in regard to constructing and navigating large ships. A considerable number of cadets were likewise sent into the different parts of Germany to learn the German military discipline.

In the course of this year the Tartars made two attempts to surprize Asoph, but they were repulsed with great loss; and the general Shein, governor of this place, pursuing his victory, took the town of Precop, capital of the Crim.

Peter, at the same time that he triumphed over his enemies abroad, made the most astonishing efforts to draw his people out of that state of barbarity in which they had been involved for so many centuries; and notwithstanding the powerful opposition which he met with from great numbers of his subjects, who wished to see him destroyed and the Russians to return to their former ignorance, resolved to travel himself into all parts of Europe to be better instructed in the arts of government, as well as to inform himself particularly in the marine and other arts which he was desirous of establishing in the different parts of his dominions.

The artful Sophia, hearing in her convent all the innovations and reformations which her brother was making, used every effort to animate the spirit of revolt which was shewing itself among all the orders of the state. The clergy exclaimed that the king had violated the law which forbade the children of Israel to have any communication with the idolatrous nations; the

nobility complained that they were despised, and that all the principal offices and dignities in the state were in the hands of strangers; the old Russians were extremely irritated at being obliged to quit their long cloaks and shave themselves; the Strelitzs were extremely offended at being discontinued to be the prince's guard; in fact, every order of the state murmured, and secretly blamed the actions of their sovereign.

The most violent of them assembled themselves together, and after long deliberation it was agreed that they should seize the first favourable opportunity to assassinate the czar, place Sophia upon the throne, massacre all the strangers, and re-establish their ancient customs and usages. Two Strelitzs charged themselves with the assassination, for which their corps had always been so famous; but they afterwards repented, and the day before the time appointed for the execution they discovered the conspiracy to the prince, who granted them their pardon, but executed their accomplices; pardoned the ineffectual attempt of Sophia, but ordered her to be watched in future with greater vigilance.

As Peter had taken the resolution of travelling into other states, after he had quelled this conspiracy, he trusted the government of his states to the prince Romadonowski and to another nobleman of the name of Strechneff; he dispersed all the Strelitzs upon the frontiers of the Crim, and charged the general Gordon to watch over the security of the capital with his regiment;—afterwards he put himself in the train of an embassy, composed of the great admiral Lefort, of the count Gallowin, governor of Siberia, of the prince Sibirski, of the chancellor Mentzikoff, and of a secretary of state, as a common gentleman, under the name of Peter Michaeloff.

These

These ambassadors passed through the Great Novogorod, traversed Estonia and Livonia, two provinces which then belonged to the king of Sweden, and at length reposed themselves at Riga, the capital of Livonia. The count Dahlberg, governor of this city, received these ambassadors and their train in the most polite manner, but he refused to let them examine the fortifications, which greatly offended the czar, and, as it is said, was one of the principal causes of the war which followed some years afterwards between this prince and Charles the Twelfth.

From Riga they directed their course to Koningsberg, capital of Ducal Prussia, where the elector of Brandenburg, sovereign of that country, neglected nothing to do honour to the ambassadors and their train, and at the same time to shew his own magnificence. Afterwards they passed through Dantzic, Berlin, Magdeburg, and Westphalia.

But Peter Michaeloff, who hated all pomp and parade, found nothing to fix his attention till he came to Amsterdam; where he lodged in the admiralty of this city, and dressed as a pilot, going every day to the village of Saardam to see the construction of the vessels, mixing with the ship-builders, and working himself very assiduously among them.

At first the ship-carpenters only knew the czar under the name of master Peter; but afterwards, when they knew his real character, with a Dutch bluntness they soon familiarized themselves with him. He worked himself at all the branches of ship-building, and enrolled himself among the number of the carpenters under the name of Peter Michaeloff.

It was at Amsterdam that this great man began to like the sciences, and to have some knowledge of the arts. He studied anatomy under the celebrated Ruifch, and received the first lectures of natural philosophy from the burgomaster Witsen.

Peter parted from Amsterdam for the Hague, where he saw William the Third king of England, who received him with great ceremony as sovereign of all the Russias. From the Hague he returned again to Amsterdam, where he recommenced his former occupation, and finished with his own hands a new sixty-gun ship, which he had begun, and which he soon afterwards sent to Archangel, as he had not at that time any other sea-port in his dominions. It was here that he received intelligence of the vacancy of the throne of Poland, and of the double nomination of the elector of Saxony, and of the prince of Conti, and where he immediately promised 30,000 to support the nomination of the elector.

The czar engaged a great number of French refugees, of Swifs, and of Germans in his service, and sent a considerable number of mechanics of every kind to Moscow; but he would not employ any one whom he had not himself seen work.

He continued his usual occupations of ship-builder, of artizan, and of a practical natural philosopher at Amsterdam, till the beginning of the year 1698, when he parted for England: king William sent him his own yacht, with two ships of war, to conduct him; where he lived in the same manner that he had done at Amsterdam. He first lodged at Deptford-yard, where he took every method to gain instruction, as he had done in Holland. The Dutch builders had only taught him their systematic

matic method, but in England he learnt the mode of constructing ships according to mathematical rules and proportions: he now learnt the science of ship-building, and could very soon give lessons in it himself.

He next applied himself to watch-making, and very soon gained a tolerable theory in this science; and, in fact, from the casting of cannon, to the making of cords, there was not any art which escaped his notice, and in which he had not worked himself.

The king entertained him with the spectacle of a naval fight, and made him a present of a frigate, in which he sent to Archangel several English Artists, and men of scientific skill, who entered themselves into his service. Among the latter was the famous Mr. Ferguson, who was the first who established arithmetic in Russia, in the College of Finances; before this time they only counted by beads stringed upon wire, after the Tartar manner of counting.

Two young mathematicians attended Mr. Ferguson, and were the first who opened the school in Russia for teaching the marine arts. A body of English merchants, at the head of whom was the marquis of Carmarthen, gave the czar 15,000*l.* sterling, to have the exclusive privilege of selling tobacco in Russia; before this time the Russian church regarded the use of snuff as highly sinful, and the patriarch had absolutely forbidden this object of commerce from being introduced into the Russian dominions. But Peter, better instructed than his clergy, and who among the other changes which he proposed to make, meditated

tated a reformation in the church, introduced this commerce into his territories.

After having studied the religion of the church of England, the manners and customs of the English nation, and a variety of arts, the czar quitted England, and directed his route towards Vienna, where he saw in private the emperor Leopold, his natural ally against the Turks, where the two monarchs entertained each other standing, to avoid the profusion, or rather confusion of ceremonies, which are absolutely necessary at this court. While the czar was in this town, and was preparing to part for Venice, he received the news of a revolt in his own dominions.

The czar, when he had quitted his states, had taken, as he imagined, every precaution to prevent any troubles which might arise during his absence; but some of the old nobility, to whom their ancient customs were dear, and the clergy, to whom all these changes appeared so many enormous sins, began the troubles: they were soon joined by the party of the princess Sophia; and the permission that the czar had given to the vent of tobacco and snuff in his states, against the advice of the clergy, was one of the principal causes of this rebellion. That superstition, which will always reign among ignorant and illiterate people, soon spread itself among the common people in this state, and from them it was propagated among the Strelitzs, who were then dispersed among the Tartars upon the borders of the Crim; but they soon assembled themselves together, and marched directly towards Moscow, with a design to place Sophia upon the throne, and prevent the czar from returning into his territories, who, as they imagined, had violated their ancient

ent usages, by daring to receive instruction in foreign nations. The body of troops commanded by the generals Shein and Gordon, being much better disciplined than the Strelitzs, attacked and beat them about fifteen leagues from Moscow: but this superiority of the foreign generals over the ancient militia of the kingdom, in which great numbers of the inhabitants of Moscow were not inrolled, so far from quelling this rebellion, irritated the nation still more.

The czar parted secretly from Vienna, and passed through Poland; he had a private interview with king Augustus, with whom he settled the plan of attacking the Swedish provinces to the east of the Baltic.

He arrived at Moscow in September 1698, to the great surprise of both parties, who thought him then in Italy: he immediately gave large recompences to those who had vanquished the Strelitzs; all the prisons were full of these unhappy wretches, who were severely punished for their crime. Their chiefs, with several officers, and those of the clergy, who had been the most active in this rebellion, were condemned to death, and several were broken upon the wheel; two women were burnt alive, and near 2000 of the Strelitzs were hanged about the walls of the city, on the high roads, and about the convent where the princess Sophia and her sister resided. A still greater number of this body, who had wives and children, were dispersed, with their families, into Siberia, in the kingdom of Astracan, and about Asoph; and the whole system of the Strelitzs, which had always been so formidable to the sovereigns of this state, as the Janissaries are and have always been to the sultans of Constantinople, and which none of his predecessors dared

dared even diminish, was broken for ever, and their names even abolished. But to draw off the attention of the nation in some measure from these acts of severity, he established this year the order of St. Andrew.

When he had destroyed the Strelitzs, he established regular regiments, with uniforms, which still continue, together with some regiments of guards; as he had also himself passed through every military degree, he likewise determined that the sons of the nobility should begin their exercises as common soldiers, before they could obtain any rank as officers; the same order was likewise observed in the sea service.

Some English and Dutch ship-carpenters and engineers worked with the greatest diligence to augment his fleet at Asoph, to make some dry-docks for careening his ships, and also to complete that great undertaking of opening a communication between the rivers Don and Wolga, which had been abandoned by the German engineer Brakel.

In this year the czar lost the general Lefort, who was his counsellor, friend, and confident, who first devised and arranged the plan of the principal reformatations which Peter had instituted in his empire.

As soon as the czar had quelled the rebellion of the Strelitzs, he immediately made a reform in his council of state, in his finances, in the church, and even in all the orders of the nation. The finances were at this time administered much in the same manner as they are in Turkey; every nobleman or gentleman who was proprietor of a manor, paid a stipulated sum for his
7 manor,

manor, which he levied upon those who lived upon his land, whom he regarded as his slaves; and the czar established the burgo-masters of the towns to be the receivers of the citizens; because they were not powerful enough to arrogate to themselves the right of not paying into the public treasure, but what they thought proper, which the receivers before this had generally done. This new plan for the administration of the finances met with greater opposition than any other part of the reformation which he had projected.

The reformation which he made in the church, which was supposed would be attended with difficulty and danger, cost him very little trouble. The patriarchs had always set themselves up against the authority of the throne; and the bishops had arrogated to themselves the authority of inflicting capital punishments, contrary to the spirit of religion and of civil government: the czar divested them of this usurped prerogative; and as the patriarch Adrian died about this time, he abolished this dignity entirely, and united all the great landed property which was annexed to it, to the publick finances, which were much in want of such a supply.

Though the the czar did not declare himself to be the chief of the Russian church, he assumed all the authority which was before annexed to it; for notwithstanding he established a synod, it will appear by the preamble of the edict which he published in the year 1721, for regulating ecclesiastical affairs, that he acted as their supreme legislator and master. “ We should (says he) “ believe ourselves guilty of ingratitude towards the Most High, “ if after having made a reformation in our military and civil “ orders, we should neglect the different orders of our church; “ for

“ for which reason, after the example of our most ancient kings,
 “ whose piety is so celebrated, we have taken upon us the care
 “ of established good regulations for the clergy, &c.” It is
 true he instituted a synod for carrying the ecclesiastical laws
 into execution, but the members of this synod were obliged to
 take the following oath, before they entered upon their office :
 “ I do swear to be the faithful and obedient servant and sub-
 “ ject of Peter the First, emperor of all the Russias, my natural
 “ and true sovereign, and to the august successors whom he shall
 “ be pleased to name by virtue of that incontestable power which
 “ he has for doing it :—I acknowledge that he is the supreme
 “ judge of this spiritual college ; and I moreover swear by that
 “ God who sees all things, that I understand and that I explain
 “ this oath with all the force and in the sense that the
 “ words shall appear to convey to those who read or to those
 “ who hear them.”—In fact Peter was not one of the mem-
 bers of this synod, but he directed their laws.

While this great reform was making in his states, Peter saw
 that his country was very thinly peopled, and that the great
 numbers of Monks and Nuns who were in every part of his
 dominions, contributed very much to this depopulation. It was
 always the custom in the Russian church, that the secular
 clergy should be married at least once, they were even obliged
 to it ; and when a priest had lost his wife, he ceased to officiate
 as a priest. But the multitudes of young men and young women
 who made a vow of chastity, and who lived in a cloister at the
 expence of others, appeared to the czar to be extremely preju-
 dicial to population, and therefore he ordered that no person of
 either sex should enter into a monastery, till they were arrived
 at their fiftieth year ; in fact till they had attained an age
 in

in which not one in ten thousand has any inclination to take the vows ; and forbad them, under the most severe penalties, to receive any man who was invested with a public employment, let him be of what age soever. This regulation has since been abolished ;—but the patriarchal dignity has never been re-established, and all the revenues which were annexed to it, are now applied to the payment of the troops.

These regulations excited great murmurs among the populace for some time, but they afterwards ceased, as the most sensible of the people saw that Peter gave more to the church than he took away from it. He soon made the clergy more intelligent and more regular in their functions : he founded three colleges at Moscow for studying the learned languages, and where those who proposed to enter into religious orders were obliged to study.

Peter carried his plan of reformation even to the manners and customs of the people : before his time marriages were contracted in Russia in the same manner as they are at present in Turkey and in Persia, where the man does not see the woman he is to marry till after the contract is signed, and in fact till there is no receding ; a practice that is very well calculated for countries where polygamy is established, and where the women are shut up, but must always be disagreeable in a country where one woman only is allowed for one man, and where divorces are very rare. Desirous of inducing the Russians to follow the manners and customs of the nations through which he had travelled, the czar had engaged masters of all sorts to instruct his people in almost every useful art and custom which he had seen in Europe.

The attention of all great legislators has been to draw mankind out of the state of nature, and to make them sociable ; and for this purpose example is generally more efficacious than written laws : the circumstance of being assembled together in a town conduces very little towards this effect, except there is a certain communicativeness and reciprocal esteem between the members of this society, which not only softens the manners, but lessens the disagreeableness of life.

The czar, though he had no education, soon perceived the efficacy of this general maxim, and introduced assemblies in all the great towns of his dominions, as well as at Moscow : he invited the matrons, with their daughters, to come to court, dressed after the mode of the southern nations, and even published regulations for conducting these assemblies. But to make all these innovations the more agreeable to the people, the czar abolished the word golut or slave, which the Russians till this time made use of, whenever they spoke to their sovereign, or whenever they presented a petition to him ; and ordered them to make use of the word Baab, which signifies subject, in its place. This change did not make him less absolute, nor diminish the obedience which they owed him, but still it made this obedience more agreeable.

All these, with a great number of other innovations, were received with great applause by the sensible part of the nation, and the complaints of the partizans of the ancient manners were in some measure overpowered by the acclamations of reasonable men. While Peter was civilizing his subjects, and making a number of useful regulations in his kingdom, he never lost
fight

fight of the great object which he had always the most at heart, namely, making Russia a great maritime power.

But since his return from his travels, his projects for a marine were much too great for the sea of Asoph; which, by the treaty of Carlowits, in the year 1699, was ceded to him by the Turks, and his establishments upon the Caspian Sea were not proper for a fleet of ships of war; and therefore he turned his attention towards the Baltic, without abandoning however his marine establishments upon the rivers Don and Wolga.

The eighteenth century was opened with a very interesting scene for all the northern parts of Europe. The Russians, as I have before observed, had been for several centuries in possession of the provinces of Ingria and Carelia, which the Swedes had seized during the time of their civil wars, and had the same ceded to them by treaty when the family of Romanow came to the throne. The czar had these provinces so much the more at heart, as the recovering them would open that communication with the Baltic, which had so long been the object of his desires.

He communicated his project to Augustus king of Poland, during the secret interview which the two monarchs had at Warsaw; and Augustus on his side was no less desirous of retaking from the Swedes the rich province of Livonia, which had been ceded by a former king of Poland to Charles the Eleventh of Sweden by the treaty of Oliva.

These two princes entered into an alliance with Frederick the Fourth king of Denmark, against Charles the Twelfth king

of Sweden, who was then only in his eighteenth year, and from whom, in all appearance, they had not much to fear. The czar immediately marched an army of 80,000 men into Ingria, who drew after them a train of 140 pieces of cannon. It is true there were not above 15,000 men of this army that were disciplined and regular troops; the rest were only a rude, undisciplined, and badly armed militia, composed of Cossacks, Tartars, Circassians, &c. However with this army he opened the siege of Narva, a little town in Ingria, which had a commodious port, and which he supposed would very soon fall into his hands. But though there were only 1000 Swedes in garrison at Narva, they made such a gallant resistance, that after a siege of two months the Russians had made but little progress; and during this interval a body of Russians, who were on their march to reinforce the czar's army, were beaten by the garrison of Derpt, near the lake Peypus.

Charles the Twelfth, who was threatened with such powerful enemies, as I have already observed, made a descent near Copenhagen, and in less than six weeks forced the king of Denmark to sign a peace. The king of Poland was at this time besieging Riga, the capital of Livonia; Charles immediately sent succours to the town, and forced the Poles and Saxons to retire; afterwards he embarked all his little army, which was about 20,000 men, and landed them in Livonia in the middle of the month of November.

The czar, hearing that Charles the Twelfth was advancing to attack him, and supposing that his troops would soon be in possession of the town, which was then very closely pressed, flew to Novogorod to hasten the coming of a body of 40,000 recruits

recruits which were on their march to join his forces, and left his army which was before Narva, and his instructions for pressing the siege to the prince De Croy, who was a native of Flanders, but afterwards entered into the service of the czar.

The prince Dolgorouki was the commissary general of the army. Jealousy between these chiefs, and the absence of the czar, were the cause of the defeat which followed. The prince De Croy gave orders, and Dolgorouki would not obey them. The Russian officers rose against the Germans; they massacred De Croy's secretary, the colonel Lyon, and many others; every one quitted his post, and the whole army was in tumult and confusion at the very moment that they were attacked by Charles the Twelfth, at the head of his advanced guard of 8000 men, with such impetuosity, that a terror was spread throughout the whole camp before they had time to recollect themselves; so that, in fact, the Swedes had very little more to do than to kill men who were stricken with a panic, and who were running away. Great numbers threw themselves into the river Narva, and were drowned; and near 30,000 of them threw down their arms, and were made prisoners, together with all their officers, cannon, baggage, &c.

This victory was complete. The czar, who was advancing with 40,000 men to cover the siege, heard of the defeat of his army when he was only one day's march from Narva; and, superior to all events of this kind, he did not lose courage, but re-assembled all his scattered troops, and posted himself between the lake Peypus and the river Wolchow, to cover his dominions, while Charles the Twelfth, more desirous of revenging himself than of conquering, immediately marched to

to attack the king of Poland. "I am well persuaded," said the czar, "that the Swedes will beat us for some time; but at last we shall learn to beat them; we will avoid coming to a general engagement with them, but we will weaken them by little actions."

After having given his orders, and provided against any surprise, he immediately departed for Moscow to cast new cannon, as he had lost all his train before Narva; as he was therefore in want of brass, he took all the bells of the churches and of the convents for this purpose, with which he made one hundred pieces of large cannon, and one hundred and forty-three field pieces of three and six pounders. In all other countries when the sovereign gives orders, his subjects execute them; but here the czar was obliged to do every thing himself.

While he was making all these preparations in his own country, the king of Poland proposed an interview with him at Birzen in Samogitia, where the two monarchs pledged their honour to each other reciprocally, not to lay down their arms till they had stripped the king of Sweden of all the territories which he possessed on the eastern side of the Baltic. The czar offered a subsidy, with 20,000 men, and to cede all his pretensions to Livonia, which they proposed immediately to invade, if the republic of Poland would join with their king as elector of Saxony, in the war. But Charles the Twelfth was already become very formidable; and the republic, on the other hand, by refusing this offer, exposed themselves to all the horrors of a civil war: the propositions of the czar had less effect upon the diet, than the fear of the consequences. The Poles trembled at the idea of having their country made the theatre of war by the
Russians,

Russians, Saxons, and Swedes ; the greatest part of the diet therefore declared against the czar's proposition. The partizans of the king Augustus on the other hand animated themselves violently against the opposite party, from a supposition that the king would annex a great province to the kingdom, and a civil war was the consequence.

Having finished the conference, and settled a plan of operations with Augustus, the czar immediately returned to Moscow to fulfil his promises, and sent prince Repnin with 4000 men to join the Saxons, who were entrenched upon the banks of the Duhna. But the terror of the arms of Charles was spread in such a manner through all the North, that notwithstanding the advantageous situation of the Saxons and Russians, he passed the river without any loss, and gained a complete victory over them.

Upon the borders of the great province of Novogorod are the lakes Peypus and Ladoga, which are of considerable extent, and where it was necessary to support a fleet to prevent the Swedes from carrying the war into this great province, to be always ready to enter into their provinces of Livonia, Estonia, and Ingria, and more particularly to form seamen ; the czar therefore, during the course of the year 1701, ordered a hundred half galleys to be built upon the borders of each of those lakes, and each galley was to carry fifty soldiers. The field-marshal Sczemeretoff entered Livonia at the head of 50,000 men, and made the most terrible ravages in that province ; one of his detachments beat a detachment of the Swedes, and the czar, to disabuse and encourage his subjects, who till then regarded the Swedes as invincible, made great rejoicings in all his dominions on account of this victory.

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At the same time their half-gallies were victorious upon the lake Peypus, and they even took a Swedish frigate. The czar in person laid siege to the town of Derpt, but the Swedish general relieved it, and forced him to abandon this enterprize.

But while the war was carrying on in those provinces with various success, the czar was informed that a Swedish fleet had failed to destroy the port of Archangel; he immediately flew thither, raised a sufficient force to prevent a descent, traced out the plan for a citadel, laid the first stone, returned to Moscow, from thence to the theatre of war. He soon after attacked and took Nottebourg, in the province of Ingria, where the river Neva disembogues itself, and changed its name for that of Schlusselfbourg; which, in the German languages signifies the key; in fact it was the key of the provinces of Ingria and of Livonia.

The return of Peter into his capital was celebrated by a triumphant entry; this policy being very necessary to excite emulation among a people who had as yet but a very imperfect idea of true valour.

In the midst of the cares and fatigues which now occupied the czar on account of this war, which had begun so unhappily, he never lost sight of one of the great projects which he had always at heart, namely, that of civilizing and enriching his subjects. A great fire burnt down a considerable part of the town of Moscow, where the houses were then built of wood; he immediately gave orders for repairing this loss; and in a very short time that part of the city was rebuilt with stone houses: he continued his works upon the great canal, which was to form a
commu-

communication between the rivers Don and Wolga; he bought a great number of sheep in Poland and in Saxony, which he brought, together with shepherds to take care of them, into his dominions for the use of their wool, with which he proposed to make cloth to cloath his army: he published several edicts to invite strangers to come and establish themselves in his kingdom, in which he promised them great privileges and recompences; together with other edicts for suppressing luxury and for civilizing the people.

Charles, on the other hand, pursued the course of his victories, and left in the provinces of Livonia, Ingria, &c. as many troops as he imagined would preserve them against the attacks of the Moscovites: he had already formed the design to dethrone the king of Poland, and afterwards to pursue the czar to Moscow with his victorious arms.

There had been several little actions between the Russians and the Swedes, in which the latter were not always superior; and even by these little battles the Russians gained such experience, and made such a progress in their discipline, that within a year after the battle of Narva the czar had a body of troops so well disciplined, that they gained a victory over one of the best Swedish generals. The body of troops which the czar employed in the galleys on the lake Peypus kept the Swedish provinces of Livonia and Estonia continually alarmed.

The king of Sweden advanced in Poland, but the Russians continually gained ground in Livonia and Ingria; at length the marshal Sczemeretoff attacked the Swedish general Slippembac near the river Embac, and beat him: after this victory he took

the little town of Mariembourg in Livonia, which, though it does no longer exist, will always be famous for the adventure of the empress Catherine the First.

This little town surrendered at discretion, and the Swedes, whether through inadvertence, or whether through design, is not yet decided, set fire to all the magazines; on which the Russians, irritated at seeing themselves disappointed of their booty, destroyed the town entirely, and carried away all the inhabitants captive. Among the number of the captives was a young Livonian woman, who had been bred up in the house of the Lutheran minister of that place, and who was taken into the service of general Baur: the Russian general Mentzikoff saw her, and begged her of Baur; and the czar, who often visited his favourite, charmed with the beauty and wit of Catherine, fell in love with her, took her to be his mistress, and afterwards married her: this was the woman who was sovereign of all the Russias after the death of Peter, with the title of Catherine the First.

In the beginning of the year 1703, although the czar was so deeply occupied in making preparations for the war, he continued his great and original plan of improving the civil government and state of the nation: he this year established a printing-office at Moscow, and began with printing the translation of several books of morality and of the sciences in the Russian and Latin languages: Ferguson established several schools for teaching geometry, astronomy, and navigation.

The czar established likewise several new manufactures in his dominions; and hospitals, where old people and children might be

be taken proper care of, and, at the same time, where their work might in some measure contribute to provide them with necessaries.

After he had made these civil establishments, he departed from Moscow to join his army upon the borders of Ingria, and laid the country waste even to the walls of Narva.

The Swedes were at this time in possession of an important fortress near the lake Ladoga, and it was necessary to make himself master of this fortress to secure his conquests and favour his designs; he therefore laid siege to it, took, and demolished it. It was not only necessary to besiege this fortress by land, but likewise to prevent any succours from being thrown into it by water. The czar undertook the latter himself, and conducted his galleys, loaded with soldiers, to prevent the Swedish convoys from being thrown into the place, whilst his generals carried on the trenches in form.

While the Russians were gaining great advantages over the Swedes on the borders of the Baltic, the Tartars of the kingdom of Kasan, who had been barbarously treated by one of the czar's officers who was sent among them to levy recruits of men and horses, revolted, and, after committing the greatest ravages, refused to lay down their arms before the czar had promised them that they should be re-established in their ancient rights and privileges.

After taking the fortress of Nyefchantz, the czar resolved to build the town of Petersbourg, where the river Neva disembogues itself into the gulph of Finland, on a desert and marshy

piece of ground: the stones which formed the bastions of Nyefchantz served Peter to lay the foundation of the place which is now the capital of the Russian empire, and one of the finest cities in all the North.

They began with raising a little fort in one of the islands, which is at present in the middle of the town. At first the Swedes paid no regard to this new establishment in the midst of a marshy desert, as no large vessel could then come near it; but afterwards, when they saw the fortifications advancing, a town forming, and the little island of Cronstadt, which is before the town, become an almost impregnable fortress, capable of resisting all the marine forces of the northern powers, they several times attempted to destroy these new works, but were always repulsed. Such a great plan should have been carried into execution in the time of peace; but the indefatigable czar, who animated every thing, was determined to execute it in the midst of a war: he brought a great number of workmen of all kinds from Moscow, Astracan, Kasan, and the Ukraine; and notwithstanding the difficulties they encountered, in five months a town was finished: it was begun in May 1703, and finished in November of the same year. It is true it was only a number of wooden houses at first, with two large houses of brick, surrounded with ramparts; but time and perseverance have brought it to what it now is.

To draw off the attention of the Swedes from this new colony, which he was establishing almost under their cannon, the czar, at the head of 60,000 men, attacked the fortress of Jama near Narva; and at the same time made an attack upon Finland, where there were only 4000 men, under the command of major-general

general Cronhiort, to defend this great province : this little force was soon obliged to give way to the Russians, who were now well disciplined and animated by their sovereign.

The king of Poland was at this time in the greatest distress : the czar sent him a reinforcement of 12,000 men, and a subsidy of 300,000 roubles, i. e. about 60,000*l*. though the whole revenues of his dominions did not at that time exceed six millions of roubles, with which he was to support a considerable naval force, several armies, and to continue the works in all the new establishments which he had made : he had begun to fortify, at the same time, Novogorod, Pleskow, Kiovia, Smolensko, Asoph, and Archangel ; he founded the town of Petersburg, and had built a great number of ships and gallies ; besides all the civil establishments which he had made since the beginning of the war.

In the beginning of the year 1704, the Swedes made another attempt to destroy St. Petersburg and the citadel of Cronstadt, but they were repulsed with loss. A fleet of Swedish brigantines appeared upon the lake Peypus : the Russian half-gallies attacked them, and after a vigorous combat took them every one, together with ninety-eight pieces of cannon ; on which the czar undertook the siege of Derpt and of Narva at the same time, the latter of which was besieged by sea and land. The garrison of Derpt were in expectation of a reinforcement of troops every hour, when the czar made use of a stratagem, which was the means of making the town surrender without any great difficulty. He dressed two regiments of his infantry in the Swedish uniforms, and gave them Swedish colours ; and with them he feigned an attack of the Russian entrenchments.

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The garrison, deceived by this appearance, made a vigorous fall; on which the supposed Swedes immediately united themselves with the Russians, repulsed the garrison, and entered with them into the town; and notwithstanding the Swedes shewed great valour and bravery, were obliged to surrender; the czar granted them a very honourable capitulation, and preserved all the liberties and privileges of the town.

Narva made a longer defence, but was at length taken by assault; and notwithstanding all the attention of the czar, the Russians committed many cruelties in the town. The government of this place was entrusted to Mentzikoff, now a prince and a major-general: such was the authority of Peter the Great, that he had already accustomed his subjects to see every thing granted to merit, and nothing to the empty name of nobility.

Being now master of the province of Ingria, Peter carried on the works of St. Petersburg with the greatest expedition, where they had already built several houses of brick and stones, an arsenal, magazines, and several other public buildings.

After taking Narva, the czar offered new succours to his ally the elector of Saxony, who was now dethroned and driven out of Poland: he promised this prince another body of troops besides the 12,000 men whom he had already sent; and, in fact, he immediately gave orders to the general Repnin to march into Lithuania at the head of 6000 men of his infantry and 6000 cavalry to join the forces he had already in that province. But in the beginning of the year 1705, when the campaign was ready to open in Poland, a Swedish fleet advanced to destroy St. Petersburg and Cronstadt; it was composed of twenty-two ships of
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of war of fifty-four and sixty-four guns, with six frigates, two bomb-ships, and two fire-ships, and a great number of transports. Their troops made a descent in the little island of Kotin, under the cannon of their ships; but a Russian colonel, who commanded there, ordered his regiment to lie down upon the earth whilst the Swedes were landing their troops under the cannon of the fleet; as soon as they were landed, the whole regiment rose all of a sudden, and made such a violent fire upon the Swedes, that they were obliged to retire and endeavour to regain their ships, leaving a great number of killed and wounded in the hands of the Russians. They afterwards made another descent, and were joined by a great body of troops from Wibourg, who advanced towards St. Peterbourg; but they were attacked by the Russians, and obliged to retire with great loss. The workmen were no longer disturbed in this town.

On the other hand, the czar advanced at the head of 70,000 men towards Lithuania and Courland, with a design of penetrating to Riga; his plan being to subdue the whole province of Livonia, while Charles the Twelfth was taking his measures to subdue the whole kingdom of Poland to the new king whom he had caused to be elected. The czar was at Wilna in Lithuania when the field-marshal Sczemeretoff advanced towards Mittau the capital of Courland, where he met the Swedish general Lewenhaupt, who attacked and gained a complete victory over the Russians, taking all their cannon and baggage: and afterwards, hearing that the czar was approaching, he retired and posted himself under the cannon of Riga. Peter advanced by forced marches towards Mittau, took the town, and besieged the citadel, which surrendered by capitulation.

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The enemies of the czar had spread a report through the whole empire, that the army of this prince was totally ruined near Mittau, which did him more hurt than the battle itself. The rest of the ancient Strelitzs, who were in garrison in Astracan, hearing of this false intelligence, and supposing it to be true, revolted, massacred the governor of the town, and obliged the czar to send a large body of troops to make them submit, and to punish them.

At this time every thing conspired against Peter; the fortune and bravery of Charles the Twelfth, the unhappy situation of Augustus, the neutrality which the king of Denmark was forced to keep, the revolt in the remote provinces of Astracan, the murmurs of his subjects, who then felt all the inconveniencies of the reformation which he was instituting, and who had not reflection and foresight enough to judge of it, the discontent of the nobility, who were subjected to military discipline, and the want of resources to carry on all his great undertakings; but nothing discouraged this great prince a single moment: he had quelled the revolt, secured the province of Ingria, taken the citadel of Mittau, notwithstanding Lewenhaupt had beaten a great detachment of his troops, and was then at liberty to traverse Samogitia and Lithuania.

It was at Grodno, the capital of the latter province, that he had another conference with king Augustus, where he consoled him on account of his misfortunes, and at parting left him a considerable sum of money, together with a great body of troops; and, as it had always been his custom, intended to pass the winter at Moscow, to carry into execution the plan of civil policy which he had adopted; but no sooner was he arrived in

his capital, than he learnt that Charles the Twelfth, at the head of a victorious army, was advancing towards Grodno to fight the Russians, and that Augustus was retired into Saxony; on which intelligence this active prince immediately left Moscow to join his army; but he found, on entering Lithuania, that the Swedes were masters of that province, and that his army was dispersed; on which he retired into the duchy of Smolensko, where he was joined by the prince Mentzikoff and the field-marshal Ogilvie, with the remains of the army that was at Grodno.

As Charles the Twelfth was more desirous of glory than of conquest, instead of pursuing his active enemy into his dominions, he pursued Augustus into Saxony, and left the czar at liberty to retrieve his affairs: in consequence of this, after having detached Mentzikoff into Poland at the head of 20,000 men, he immediately departed for Ingria, which he put in a good state of defence; and afterwards, with a body of troops which were encamped in this province, he marched to Wibourg, the capital of Carelia, on the gulph of Finland, and laid siege to the place; but, by the timely succours which the Swedes sent thither, he was obliged to raise the siege.

Mentzikoff was joined in Poland with the remains of the Polish and Saxon troops which composed the army of Augustus, with this prince at their head, who was at this time negotiating a treaty of peace with Charles the Twelfth, then in possession of the greatest part of Saxony.

This combined army soon fell in with a body of Swedish troops commanded by general Maderfeld, which Mentzikoff, against the advice of Augustus, resolved to attack, and forced

to quit the field of battle, leaving 4000 dead upon the spot, and taking 2500 prisoners. This battle was fought at Kalish, in the palatinate of king Stanislaus, and was the first regular battle that was gained by the Russians over the Swedes. Notwithstanding which, Augustus soon after signed a most shameful treaty of peace with Charles the Twelfth, by which he renounced the crown of Poland; abandoned his ally the czar, who had given him such powerful succours; and, what was the most disgraceful part of the whole, gave up the czar's ambassador Patkul, who was a gentleman of Livonia, and had entered into the czar's service, to his enemy Charles the Twelfth, who ordered him to be broken alive on the wheel; an act of barbarity which would have shocked a Calmouk or a Tartar.

This unhappy man, with six other gentlemen of his province, had been deputed by the states to represent respectfully to the court of Sweden, during the reign of Charles the Eleventh, that the rights and privileges of their province had been invaded, and to desire redress. Charles, offended at this boldness, ordered the deputies to be imprisoned for having done their duty; and Patkul, who was their speaker, was condemned to die; however, he escaped out of prison and went into the service of the king of Poland, afterwards into that of the czar, and was appointed his ambassador, when he met this unhappy fate.

The czar was shocked on hearing the ignominious peace that Augustus had concluded with their common enemy; and irritated more than ever against the Swedes for the indignity which they had shewn him in the person of his ambassador, he assembled an army of 100,000 men and entered Poland, where he published a manifesto against Augustus, and wanted to oblige the Poles to elect

elect another king, but they evaded his propositions; on which the czar returned into his own dominions, and made preparations to prosecute the war with vigour; but at the same time he tendered some propositions of peace to Charles, who absolutely refused to hearken to any terms, and declared that he would treat with the czar in Moscow.

After Charles had forced Augustus to accept the terms he proposed, he quitted Saxony, traversed Poland, and on the sixth of February arrived at Grodno, where the czar was at that time posted with a small body of troops; this prince, though superior in forces to the king of Sweden, having determined to avoid a general action, and to content himself with harraffing his enemy. The king of Sweden advanced to Grodno with only 800 of his guards, surprized the czar, and obliged him to retire precipitately; but when the latter discovered the small force with which he had to contend, he returned again, and attacked the Swedes in the town; and the king, who was now reinforced with all the van-guard of his army, obliged the czar to retire a second time.

Charles had now augmented his troops in Livonia and in Finland, so that the czar had much to fear for his conquests on this side, as well as for those which he had made in Lithuania, for his own territories, and even for his capital: it was necessary therefore to fortify himself in all these parts, though they were so far distant from each other.

It was very difficult for Charles to advance towards the east through a marshy country, which was almost destroyed by poverty and famine; the czar therefore posted his troops in such

a manner as to guard the most important passes, and prevent his enemy from advancing; and immediately departed for St. Petersburg, to put every thing in order on that side. Finding that he had here a considerable marine ready to put to sea, whilst his enemy was detained in Lithuania by continual rains, he made a descent in Finland, and destroyed the town of Borgo, where he found a great magazine.

As soon as the season permitted his troops to march, Charles directed his course towards Moscow. The czar likewise assembled all his forces, quitted the surrounds of Wilna, and retired towards the Dneiper, and encamped at Mohiloff. Charles advanced upon the little river Berezine, and beat a little detachment of the Russians which were stationed there to dispute his passage, and arrived at Holozin upon the river Bibitsch, where the czar had posted a very considerable body of troops to check the impetuosity of his enemy; these troops were intrenched, and defended with several batteries of cannon upon the banks of the river, which was greatly swelled by the falls of rain, that had almost drowned the whole adjacent country, so that the passage of the river appeared to be impossible; but the Swedes, who likewise erected batteries of cannon to favour their passage, crossed the river and formed themselves in order of battle before the Russian entrenchments, and attacked seven times this body of troops, who did not give way before the seventh attack; so much were the Russians advanced in their military discipline.

This victory, though it gained Charles great credit, ought to have shewn him the danger to which he exposed himself by advancing so far in the enemy's country, when he had to contend
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with troops little inferior to his in bravery and discipline, and which greatly exceeded his in numbers.

About this time Peter fell sick, and was conveyed to Smolensko; but the strength of his constitution, and the activity of his mind, contributed very much to recover his health; and being now informed that the Swedes were meditating a descent upon his new colony of St. Petersburg, he immediately flew thither to hasten the armament which was making in that port to repel their attacks. He afterwards returned to his army, and by avoiding a general engagement with the Swedes, and cutting off their supplies of provisions, insensibly ruined their army. The Swedish troops were loaded with gold, the spoils of Poland and Saxony, but they had not bread to eat. In this situation was Charles, near the town of Mohilow, followed by the czar with a great army, when he received the proposal of Mazeppa, hettman of the Cossacks, whom the czar had raised to this dignity, which was to betray his benefactor, to deliver all the Ukraine into his hands, and to become tributary to the crown of Sweden. This hettman had formed great magazines for the Swedish army in Bathurin, the capital of the Ukraine, and pressed Charles to come immediately to his assistance. The king of Sweden, who was in great want of provisions, as all the country about him was intirely ruined, was now not a little embarrassed what course to take; he expected daily the general Lewenhaupt to join him, with an army of 16 or 18,000 men, and a great convoy of provisions: the road to Moscow was open; and after having marched three or four days, he must pass through a rich and plentiful country. Mazeppa, on the other hand, promised to furnish him with all kinds of provisions, and even to support his whole army during the winter, which was approaching, and threatened

threatened to be very severe ; and moreover promised to join him with 20 or 30,000 men : but he had only the word of a Cofack and a traitor for this. However, notwithstanding what all his counsellors and general officers could say to the contrary, Charles resolved to march towards the Ukraine to join the chief of the Cofacks, not doubting but he should be able to conquer the whole Russian empire when he was joined by this warlike people ; he never considered that the czar, who was behind him with a great army, might intercept Lewenhaupt's convoy, and destroy the whole corps which that general was bringing to his assistance ; he never considered also whether Mazeppa was in a situation to make good all his promises ; but he reckoned on subduing all his enemies by his valour, and by his good fortune.

The Swedish army passed the Dnieper, and advanced towards the Desna, as it was between these two rivers that he was to wait for the hettman of the Cofacks : this was a very painful march for the Swedes, who were greatly harraffed, and lost a considerable number of men by the Russian cavalry. The czar, on the other hand, having discovered the march of Lewenhaupt, permitted him to pass the Dnieper, and when his army was occupied in passing the little rivers which fall into this great stream, he attacked him with all his forces : the Swedes repulsed the czar ; but the next day the prince Mentzikoff joined his army with a large body of infantry, and attacked the Swedes again, and continued to do this for three days successively. These actions were bloody, and the Swedes, though they still retired in good order, lost 12,000 men killed and taken prisoners, with all their convoy, cannon, and the greatest part of their baggage.

Charles

Charles received all this disagreeable intelligence when he was about to pass the Dnieper in the Ukraine, where he was joined by Mazeppa, who, instead of bringing him an army of 20,000 men, with a large convoy of provisions, came only as a fugitive, with two regiments, to demand succours.

The Cossack, it is true, marched out of his capital at the head of 20,000 men, to whom he declared that he was going to stop the progress of Charles the Twelfth, and as he depended upon their bravery, the czar would be under an eternal obligation to them for such a signal service; but when he came within a few miles of the place where he appointed to meet Charles, he informed his men of the plan which he had previously formed for himself. Happily for the czar, the greatest part of the Cossacks were honest than their chief, and were shocked at the proposal; they would not consent to betray a monarch against whom they had no complaint to make, in favour of a stranger with whom they were totally unacquainted; the greatest part of them therefore returned to their own homes, and despatched an account to the czar of the treason of their chief.

Alarmed at this news, and knowing the consequences of this affair, as well as of what utility the magazines of Mazeppa would be of to the Swedish army, the czar immediately detached Mentzikoff at the head of a body of troops, who marched through private ways and deserts, unknown to the Swedes, and presented himself before Bathurin, which was taken without much resistance, and destroyed; the great magazines which were designed for the Swedes, and all the treasures of Mazeppa, were carried off: the Cossacks, with the consent of the czar, elected another hetman; and Mazeppa was hanged in effigy. The season was

now become extremely cold, and Charles was in the midst of a desert country, almost without necessaries; his army was continually harrassed by the Russians, and most of his soldiers so much exposed to the rigour of the climate, for want of proper cloathing, that in one of his forced marches near 2000 of them died before his face.

In this deplorable situation the king of Sweden's counsellors conjured their master at least to pass the rigorous season of the year in a little town of the Ukraine called Romna, where he might fortify himself, and by the succours of Mazeppa make preparations for opening the campaign with vigour. But Charles replied, that he was not a man to shut himself up in a town. They then desired him to repass the Desna and the Dnieper, and to give his troops winter-quarters in Poland, where he would likewise be assisted by the Polish light cavalry in the interest of Stanislaus, which was absolutely necessary for him, as his army was continually harrassed by the Russian dragoons: but Charles gave no other answer, than that such a march would appear as if he was flying before the czar; that the season would soon become more favourable; and that he was determined first to subdue the Ukraine, and then to march to Moscow.

The winter was so excessively cold in the beginning of the year 1709, that the two armies were obliged to remain inactive for several weeks, and to content themselves with little actions, in which the Swedes were generally victorious; but the czar observed, in consequence of this, "that he could readily risk
"ten Russians against one Swede," because he could easily draw recruits from the different provinces of his dominions,
but

but the Swedes could not receive any but with the greatest difficulty.

During this interval the czar sent 20,000 men into Poland against the partizans of Sweden and of Stanislaus; and at the same time visited in person all the country about the Ukraine; he even went to Asoph to give particular orders for building new ships, and fortifying the citadel of Tagunzoc.

In the beginning of the month of May Charles laid siege to the town of Pultawa in the Ukraine, in which was a great magazine of provisions, and which might also serve him as a place of arms; but Mentzikoff in the czar's absence, by a manœuvre which did great honour to that general, threw succours into the place; and soon after the czar appeared at the head of an army of 60,000 men, well provided with cannon and every necessary, and determined to attack the Swedes, who, notwithstanding the supplies which they received from Mazeppa and the Cossacks, were reduced to 27,000 men, without cannon, and now almost without necessaries. The river Workla was between the besiegers and the czar's army; but the latter made a forced march along the other side of this river, and passed it about half a league above the town, in sight of the enemy, and in one night threw up an intrenchment; and if Charles had not taken the greatest precaution, his camp would have been surrounded.

The czar posted his army between two woods, and covered them with several redoubts, which were well supplied with artillery: these dispositions being made, the czar, accompanied by prince Mentzikoff, went to reconnoitre the camp of the besiegers in order to form the attack, which was begun the next

morning, and brought on that famous and bloody battle which decided the fate of Russia, Poland, Sweden, and of the greatest part of the North; and as well that of two of the most extraordinary men of this or of any other century. It is true, the risk was not equal between these two great rivals. If the king of Sweden had lost his life, which he had so often exposed to the greatest dangers, the world would only have lost a great and rash warrior; the provinces of Russia would then cease to be destroyed; Poland would regain her tranquillity, and return under the obedience of her legal king; Sweden, though stripped of the greatest part of her brave men, and of all her money, might find some consolation, and after some time recover herself: but if the czar had perished, the immense improvements and regulations which he had made to draw a great nation out of such a state of barbarity as was almost a disgrace to human nature, would have fallen with him, and in all probability this great empire would have been at present in the same state of ignorance in which it was involved about the eleventh century.

As soon as Charles perceived that the czar was about to attack him, he immediately quitted his intrenchments, disposed his army with great judgment, and attacked the Russians with such intrepidity, that notwithstanding the continual fire of their heavy cannon, which made a carnage in the Swedish army that was hardly to be paralleled, he took several of their redoubts, and had he had a sufficient number of troops to support his attacks, he would undoubtedly have gained the victory; but the fire of the other redoubts flanked him, and destroyed great numbers of his men before the action became general.

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On the other hand, the Russians resisted with great firmness, and the czar arranged his army in line of battle out of his intrenchments with good order. Peter commanded in his army as major-general: the general Baur commanded the right wing, Mentzikoff commanded the left, and Sczemeretoff commanded the center.

Charles, who had before received a wound which disabled him from walking, was carried through all the ranks with a pistol in his hand, and gave orders with great coolness, till at length a cannon ball killed one of those who carried him, and broke the chair in pieces upon which he was borne. The czar received several musket-bullets in his cloaths and in his hat; and, in fact, these two monarchs were continually exposed to the greatest danger during the whole action. At length, after a combat of two hours and a half, the Cossacks who were in the Swedish army gave way, and threw the whole army, which had now lost near 10,000 men upon the field of battle, into the greatest confusion; so that Charles was obliged to fly before him whom he had heretofore so much despised, and left all his principal officers, ministers, and even his chancellor, prisoners, with all their camp, baggage, and artillery.

About 14,000 men retreated with him, but they were followed so closely by a great body of Russian horse, under the command of prince Mentzikoff, that 12,000 of them were obliged to lay down their arms, and surrender prisoners of war; so that Charles only conducted 2000 men over the Dneiper into the Turkish dominions.

The acquisition of the battle of Pultawa proved the means of saving the czar and of the whole Russian empire, and has perhaps done more general good to mankind than the gaining of any one battle since the beginning of the world.

The Russians lost only 1300 men, and two and fifty officers, in this famous battle; the Swedish army was destroyed by the Russian artillery. Charles conducted himself during the first years of the war as a brave and experienced general; but his great success seems to have turned his head, and caused him to deem himself invincible.

The czar treated all the Swedish general officers with great politeness; but all the subaltern officers and soldiers who were made prisoners were sent into Siberia as slaves, a practice which shewed that the Russian empire had not yet emerged out of its ancient state of barbarity.

It has been said that the czar had proposed an exchange of prisoners with Charles before the battle of Pultawa, and that Charles refused it; but I never could find that fact properly attested, neither is there any probability that it was so.

As a punishment for their revolt, the czar deprived the Cossacks of all their privileges, and now put the Ukraine upon the same footing with the other provinces of the empire.

The news of this famous battle made a great change in all the affairs of the North. Charles was regarded as irrecoverably lost; and all the northern powers united to strip him of his dominions.

There

There is no greater characteristic of a man's superiority than when a number of little geniuses conspire together to ruin him. Whatever follies or extravagancies Charles might have been guilty of during the war, he was never accused of being the cause of this war, or of having wantonly offended either of those powers : his destruction was meditated when he was a child, and he entered the field to defend himself like a man. His conduct towards the king of Denmark at the beginning of the war was just and noble ; and the terms of peace which he granted to the elector of Saxony were much better than this elector deserved, considering that he had been the cause of all the war. The czar Peter indeed had some reason to be offended with the Swedish nation ; they had deprived his ancestors of two provinces, and cut off his communication with the Baltic.

Supposing Charles to be entirely ruined, the elector of Saxony protested in form against the peace which he had just before desired ; and by every act of meanness now endeavoured to regain the favour of the czar, whom he had so shamefully abandoned, taking every step to remount the throne of Poland, which he had before so unworthily occupied.

The Swedes were in the greatest consternation, as they were for some time of opinion that their king was dead ; and the senate, in this state of uncertainty, could not take any measure.

The czar, like a great and wise general, immediately resolved to take all the advantages which his victory had procured him. He renewed his alliance with Augustus, who protested solemnly against his forced abdication, but not till he had renounced all his

his pretensions to Livonia; and immediately sent the marshal Sczemeretoff into that province at the head of a great body of troops: at the same time Mentzikoff was detached with all diligence into Poland, with a body of cavalry, to join the Russian troops which were still in that country, and to encourage all the nobility who were in the interest of Augustus to drive his competitor out of the kingdom, as he was no longer regarded but as a rebel, and to disperse the little Swedish army which was still in that kingdom under the command of general Craffau.

The czar now concluded a treaty against Sweden likewise with the kings of Denmark and of Prussia. The former, after having been so nobly treated by Charles, when he might have destroyed his whole dominions, became his most implacable enemy; and the latter, whom he had never offended, joined to destroy him, because he thought him his superior: in fact, it was resolved to retake all the conquests of Gustavus Adolphus. The czar revived the ancient pretensions of the czars to Ingria, Carelia, Livonia, and to a part of Finland. Denmark claimed the province of Scania. The king of Prussia claimed Pomerania. Peter, as soon as he had finished the negociations, ordered a great army to assemble before Riga, the capital of Livonia, which he afterwards besieged in form, but finding that the garrison made a vigorous defence, he turned the siege into a blockade; and presuming that this town, with a little patience, must fall into their hands, he parted for Peterbourg to give orders in the works which were carrying on in this new colony; and afterwards retired to Moscow, where great preparations were making for a triumph, which was exhibited in the year 1710. The czar thought that these pompous shews were then absolutely necessary

necessary among a people whom he would inspire with sentiments of grandeur, and at the same time animate against the enemies they had heretofore so much dreaded. Peter had ordered seven grand arches to be erected, under which passed in procession all the artillery of the vanquished, their colours, their soldiers, officers, generals, and ministers, who were taken prisoners; all walked two and two by the sound of trumpets, the noise of cannon, and amidst the acclamations of a great multitude of people. The victors on horseback brought up the rear, and their generals formed the van, among whom the emperor kept his rank as major-general. At every arch the emperor met the deputies of the different orders of the state, and at last a number of the children of the nobility, cloathed in the Roman manner, who presented him with crowns of laurel.

During the time that this pompous shew was exhibiting at Moscow, Peter, who would not lose a moment of time, ordered his troops to besiege Elbing, a large town in Prussia, where Charles the Twelfth had a great magazine, and where there was still a strong Swedish garrison. The Russians took the town by assault, and made the garrison prisoners of war. They found in this place 123 pieces of brass cannon, and 157 mortars.

In the beginning of the month of April the czar parted from Moscow for St. Peterbourg, and immediately embarked on board the fleet which he had equipped in this port, and which was now lying at Cronstadt; and notwithstanding a violent tempest which arose soon after, and the dangerous navigation of the gulph of Finland in such circumstances, he brought his fleet into the harbour of Wibourg, a large town in Finland, in the possession.

possession of the Swedes, while his troops advanced over the frozen marshes, and invested the town by land. The garrison soon capitulated, but were afterwards made prisoners of war, notwithstanding the articles of capitulation. The Russians took this opportunity of making reprisals, as they accused the Swedes of having violated the law of nations in the person of their ambassador the prince Chilkow, who was arrested at Stockholm when the war was declared, together with all the Russian merchants. But this was an act very unworthy of Peter the great: nothing degrades a sovereign so much as the cruel usage of a garrison of brave men who have surrendered by articles of capitulation, and who have confided in his honour. That part of the capitulation which secured them the honours of war, respected themselves in particular, in which they could not be answerable for the acts of their government. Peter dared not do any thing of this kind while he thought he had any thing to fear from Charles; and therefore, notwithstanding his great talents, his brutal disposition, and want of education and sentiment, predominated at this time more than in any act he ever perpetrated in his whole life.

On the fifteenth of July in the same year, Riga likewise surrendered to the Russian arms after a long siege, in which the besiegers lost more than 10,000 men. The garrison capitulated and obtained the honours of war, because the brave Mentzikoff commanded the siege; a man who, from selling fruit and tarts in the streets of Moscow, by his superior genius and amiable qualities, contributed more to the victories and conquests of the czar, than half the officers of his army. It is true Peter had judgment and candour enough to see and to reward his singular merit, by raising him to the rank of prince, and general in chief
of

of all his armies: but how this great general and statesman, who was an ornament to the Russian nation, and whose politeness and integrity would have entitled him to great respect among the most civilized people, was treated by the dastardly nobility of this country after the death of Peter, will hereafter appear.

After the czar had made himself master of Wibourg, he returned to St. Petersburg, and in the month of September following undertook the siege of Parnau and Revel; Parnau surrendered after a siege of six days; and Revel surrendered as soon as the Russian Troops appeared before the town; but the garrison and the principal part of the inhabitants escaped with all their effects on board some Swedish ships which were then in the harbour; and after taking these towns, the czar saw himself master of all Livonia.

During this interval Charles the Twelfth, who was at Bender, used his utmost endeavours to engage the Ottoman Porte to declare war against the czar. Instead of returning to his own dominions, or giving proper orders for their defence, according to the situation of his affairs, he spent his time in intriguing with a set of mercenary ministers, with whom he was the least qualified to negotiate of any man in the world.

The Porte at first promised him 100,000 men to conduct him into Poland, and that they would immediately declare war against the Russians; but Peter, who knew the manner of treating with these ministers better than Charles, by a large sum of money which he distributed among the members of the divan, soon changed their system of politics; so that the latter could afterwards only obtain an escort of 150 men to conduct him to

the frontiers of Poland. Fired at this conduct, Charles, through the intrigues of his faithful friend Poniatowski, represented the behaviour of the ministers of the divan in such a light to the sultan Achmet the Third, that the grand vizir was exiled; the Russian ambassador sent to the castle of Seven Towers; and the Porte, gained by the remonstrances of the Kan of the Tartars, immediately declared war against the Russians.

In the beginning of the year 1711, the czar was obliged to change the scene of war from the western parts of his dominions to the frontiers of the Turkish empire: he immediately ordered a body of troops that was in Poland to advance towards Moldavia, as well as gave orders to Sczemeretoff, who commanded an army in Livonia, to quit that province, and to pursue the same rout; his favourite Mentzikoff was at the head of affairs at St. Petersburg; admiral Apraxin was sent to command at Asoph; and having established a regency at Moscow, he prepared to open the campaign early in the spring. His guards marched off likewise to join the army, in which regiments many of the young nobility of the empire served as cadets to learn the art of war.

But before Peter left Moscow to join the army, he declared his marriage with the empress Catherine, and gave orders that she should be received as czarina. He had been regularly divorced from his first wife, after having had two children by her; and the person whom he had now married, and who had lived with him some time as his mistress, known then by the name of Little Kate, was one of those whose talents and amiable qualities elevated her much above the generality of her sex, and above the unhappy situation into which she fell when she was made prisoner
at

at Marienbourg. Her engaging behaviour rendered her so agreeable to the czar, that he would always have her near his person; she accompanied him in all his journeys, shared of his fatigues, and softened his pains and disagreements by her gaiety, good humour, and complaisance, as she was unacquainted with all those imaginary wants, and that desire of luxury which the greatest part of the female sex regard as real wants; and what was still more singular in a person who never had any education, she was as humane and benevolent, as she was beautiful and intelligent: in fact she became at last so necessary to the czar, that he married her secretly in the year 1707, after she had already brought him two daughters; he had also another daughter by her the year following, who afterwards married the duke of Holstein.

The hettman of the Cofacks had orders to march an army against the Tartars, who had already begun to ravage the Ukraine. The Russian army advanced towards the Dniester; and another great body of troops, commanded by prince Galitzin, marched through Poland; and having met near Kiovia an army of Tartars, joined with some Cofacks and Swedes, they defeated them entirely, and killed 5000 of them in the field of battle. The Russian army, when it was collected together, was about 6000 men; but it was likewise to be joined with the troops of the king of Poland.

War was proclaimed against the Turks in the name of the two kings; but the diet of Poland, who did not choose to engage in this war, refused to ratify what their king had promised: so that the czar was so unhappy as to have an ally who could not assist him; he was also no less deceived in his expectations

from Cantemir, waiwode of Moldavia, and from Baffaraba, waiwode of Walachia. These two provinces, situated between the Dniester and the Danube, were a part of the Turkish dominions, and these waiwodes were tributary to and dependent upon the Porte, but were desirous of throwing off the Ottoman dominion, and, under the protection of the czar, of making themselves independent.

Cantemir, who was the chief of this conspiracy, drew the czar into the disagreeable situation into which Mazeppa had drawn Charles the Twelfth; it was he likewise who engaged Baffaraba to adopt his plan, though he alone was to be benefited by it. Cantemir promised the czar a supply of troops, and a great quantity of all kinds of provisions for the use of his army; but he deceived him, as the hettman of the Cossacks had done Charles the Twelfth.

The general Sczemeretoff, at the head of the advanced guard of the Russian army, marched to Jassy, the capital of Moldavia, to support the execution of their great plan. Cantemir immediately published a manifesto against the Turkish empire; but Baffaraba, who soon discovered his ambitious views, abandoned him, and returned to his duty; all the inhabitants of Moldavia and of Walachia remained steadfast in their duty, and those who were to furnish the provisions for the Russian army carried them to the Turkish army.

The grand vizir had now passed the Danube at the head of 100,000 men, and directed his march towards Jassy, on the banks of the Pruth. The czar, who had advanced from the frontiers of Poland, passed the Dniester, to disengage his general Sczeme-

Sczemeretoff, who was now to the south of Jaffa, upon the banks of the Pruth, and was in danger of being surrounded by 100,000 Turks and an army of Tartars.

Before Peter had passed the Dniester, he was desirous of sending Catherine to some place where she might be out of all danger; but this extraordinary woman regarded this attention of the czar as an outrage to her tenderness and resolution, and intreated him so much to be a partaker of his good or bad fortune, that he at length consented to her being his constant attendant: the army saw with pleasure this heroine on horseback at the head of the troops, as she seldom made use of any voiture.

From the banks of the Dniester the army was to march through a desert country before it could approach Jaffy, or the camp of Sczemeretoff. Catherine took this opportunity to encourage the troops by her gaiety and good humour; she sent succours to those officers who were sick, and even the wants of the common soldiers did not escape her notice.

At last they reached Jaffy, where they expected to find a magazine of provisions; but when it was too late, the czar discovered the little dependence that was to be reposed in the promises of Cantemir: he found himself in great distress for want of provisions; it was very difficult to draw them from Poland, and those which he hoped to receive from Walachia, as Cantemir had promised him, could not arrive: moreover the season was severely hot, it being in the month of July, and the earth so dry and scorched with the burning sun, that their march was often very difficult, and they were obliged to bring water at a great distance for the use of the army.

Charles

Charles the Twelfth was now at Bender, and waited with impatience in his camp the event of the war.

The czar formed some little magazines upon the right side of the Pruth, and pursued his march to join Sczemeretoff. His great plan was to prevent the Turks, who were posting below upon the left side of the river, from passing it, and coming to him: if he could have succeeded in this, he would have found no great difficulty in making himself master of the provinces of Moldavia and Walachia; he therefore immediately detached the general Janus, with the advanced guard of his army, to prevent the Turks from passing the river. But the grand vizir, notwithstanding the Swedes have represented him as a poor creature, acted on this occasion as a great general; he foresaw what the czar had in view; and before the Russian general could come to dispute his passing the river, the greatest part of the Turkish army had passed it, and if he had not retired with the greatest precipitation, he would have been surrounded. His infantry was pursued by the Turkish cavalry so far, that the czar himself was obliged to march to disengage them. The army of the grand vizir advanced then upon the right side of the river towards that of the czar. The Turks, who were now joined by a great body of Tartars, formed an army of 250,000 men, but the Russians were not above 37,000. It is true there was another considerable body of Russian troops on the other side of the mountains of Moldavia, upon the banks of the river Sereth, but the Turks had cut off all communication between them. The army of the czar began to be much distressed for want of provisions; and though his troops were encamped very near the river Pruth, it was with the greatest difficulty that they could provide themselves with water. The grand vizir had ordered a body of troops

to post themselves on the left side of the river, opposite to the Russian camp, with a large train of artillery, which kept up such a fire upon them, that they lost great numbers of men in procuring water for the army.

No general could have made better dispositions to ruin his enemy, without risking any thing, than the grand vizir did to destroy the army of the czar. He made a forced march, and passed the enemy almost in sight, compelled him to retire, and followed him; intercepted all communication between him and another body of his troops, and then surrounded him, without leaving any way to retreat; cut off all his supplies of provisions, and kept his troops exposed to the fire of several batteries of cannon from the opposite side of the river.

Peter now found himself in a more disagreeable situation than that in which Charles the Twelfth was in at Pultawa, and his whole army not only exposed to a continual cannonade, but ready to perish for want of provisions: he therefore resolved to retire to an advantageous camp, which was situated between him and Jassy, and decamped in the night, on the twentieth of July 1711; but as soon as the Turks saw them moving, they attacked the rear at break of day, and threw the Russians into some disorder; but the good discipline which the czar had established in his army was the means of saving him from destruction: the Russian guards formed themselves so suddenly, and were so soon afterwards joined by some other regiments, that they supported all the efforts of the Turkish army during the whole day, and even forced them to give ground.

There

There were some Swedish officers in the Turkish army who persuaded the grand vizir not to attack the Russians ; but by cutting off their provisions, and depriving them of water, to force them to surrender prisoners or die ; but the Turkish chief, animated by the aga of the Janissaries, and by the Kan of the Tartars, determined to attack them sword in hand. The Turks lost 7000 men in the attack which they made, and the Russians were likewise severely handled.

After this rude attack the two armies intrenched themselves during the night ; but the Russians were always surrounded and deprived of provisions, and even of water ; for as they continued their march along upon the banks of the Pruth, their camp was very near to that river, but they dared not approach it to take up water for the use of the army, as the grand vizir had ordered a body of troops on the other side of the river to observe their motions ; and as soon as the Russian soldiers came to the water side, the Turks fired grape-shot among them from their artillery, as well as kept up a constant fire with their small arms : moreover the Turkish army, which had attacked the Russians the day before, continued to cannonade their camp. The Russians lost a great number of men, and their whole army was in the greatest distress, surrounded by such a superior number of troops well provided with every thing ; almost all the czar's cavalry were dismounted, and could be of no service to him, but by fighting on foot ; consequently their situation was desperate.

The czar, uncertain whether he should attack the Turks the next day, and expose to the event of a battle his wife, his empire, his army, and in fact his all, retired to his tent in the greatest agitation, where he gave way to his chagrin, and fell
a prey

a prey to the most cruel inquietude; but fearing any of his people should see him in this situation, he absolutely forbid that any person should enter his tent. However Catherine, who perceived the situation he was in, supposed that as she had braved so many dangers with the emperor, and was then actually exposed to the fire of the Turkish artillery as much as any soldier in the army, she had a right to speak, and to employ her talents for the safety of herself and her husband. She therefore followed the czar into his tent, endeavoured to dissipate his melancholy, and persuaded him to negotiate with the grand vizir, and offer him peace; and at the same time she collected all her jewels, and added to them two magnificent pelisses of the Siberian black fox, which she designed as a present for the grand vizir, and a sum of money, as much as she could spare, for the other officers of the Porte who were the vizir's attendants. These presents were accompanied with a letter from the marshal Sczemeretoff to the chief of the Turkish army, which offered him reasonable terms of peace, and were sent with proper officers into the Turkish camp: in fact Sczemeretoff offered to cede Asoph and the port of Taganroc, which had been the cause of the war, to the Turkish empire. Several hours passed before they had any answer from the grand vizir, while the cannonade was kept up with great vivacity on both sides; so that it was feared that the porters of the presents and of the letter had either been killed by Turkish cannon, or been retained as prisoners, and therefore they dispatched a second courier with a duplicate of the proposals; and at the same time a council of war was held in the czarina's presence, in which it was resolved, "That
" if the enemy would not accept the conditions of peace which
" were offered them, and should demand the Russian army
" to lay down their arms and surrender at discretion, all the

“ council are unanimously of the opinion, that the czar shall
“ attack them immediately, and endeavour to cut his way
“ through their army.” In consequence of this resolution they immediately intrenched their baggage, and ordered a body of troops to defend it; and they were advanced in order of battle, within 100 yards of the Turkish army, when the grand vizir published a suspension of arms.

All the friends of Charles the Twelfth accuse the grand vizir of treachery and of cowardice, but it does not appear that their imputations are just; undoubtedly the vizir might have made some terms for Charles, and been of great use to him in his present situation; but his conduct and haughtiness were such, that he had no right to expect any favour from this minister.

Moreover the negotiations for this peace were publicly conducted in the presence of the Count Poniatowski, who was particularly attached to Charles the Twelfth, and the presents which Catherine sent to the vizir and to his officers, were no other than what are commonly sent on such occasions in the eastern countries.

Besides the grand vizir was well informed that the Russian army, commanded by the general Renner, had passed three rivers, taken the town and castle of Brahila, though defended by a numerous garrison, and that he was ready to pass the Danube, and to carry the war into Bulgaria; that the czar had another army advancing upon the frontiers of Poland, and that the event of a battle was always uncertain, as he had seen the day before, when 8000 Russians repulsed his whole army. But what the vizir was principally accused of, namely, the being well acquainted
6 with

with the state of the czar's provisions, he was certainly not informed of this, as no deserters or spies passed from one camp to the other. Upon the whole, after well considering this matter, I see no reason for accusing the grand vizir, as some authors have done who have written upon this subject.

The Russian vice-chancellor Shaffiroff conducted the treaty in the Turkish camp. The grand vizir, by the council of Poniatowski, insisted as one of the principal conditions of the peace, that the czar should engage not to concern himself any longer with the interests of Poland. The Kan of the Tartars demanded a yearly tribute of 40,000 ducats: this point was long contested on both sides, but at last it was given up. The grand vizir demanded with firmness that the czar should give up the traitor Cantemir; to which the czar answered, "I will sooner
 " cede several of my provinces to the Turkish empire, as I shall
 " still have some hopes of recovering them, but the loss of my
 " faith is irreparable; I cannot violate it; we have nothing
 " proper to ourselves, but our honour, and to renounce it, is to
 " cease to be a monarch." Peter did not seem to have such nice ideas of honour when he broke the treaty of capitulation which he made with the garrison of Wibourg.

In fact, the treaty was at length concluded, and signed near the village of Jalksen, upon the banks of the Pruth; by which it was agreed, that Asoph, with all its territories, should be restored to the Turks, together with all the artillery and stores with which it was provided when the czar took it in the year 1696; that the fortress and port of Taganroc should be demolished, together with the fortress of Samara, upon the river of

that name, and all the other little fortresses which the czar had erected in consequence of this conquest.

This must have been a very mortifying idea to the czar, who had formed great projects for a navigation upon the Black and Caspian Seas; but the situation of his affairs at that time was such as made it absolutely necessary for him to comply. Towards the end of the treaty they added an article respecting Charles the Twelfth, and from this very article it will be seen how much the grand vizir was dissatisfied with his conduct: it was here stipulated that the czar should not directly or indirectly oppose Charles, if he chose to return to his own dominions, and that the czar and he might make peace if they thought proper.

I should have observed that the grand vizir, when he arrived in Moldavia at the head of the Turkish army, sent to Charles the Twelfth at Bender, to pass into the Ottoman camp, to concert with him the plan of operations for the campaign; but Poniatowski, who carried the message, was mortified to find that Charles refused this invitation, and treated the vizir with contempt, because he did not come to make him the first visit. Such haughtiness and such punctilios were inexcusable in Charles, considering the situation in which he was, and though Poniatowski excused him like an able politician, yet the vizir never forgot the affront which he imagined he received, and the contempt with which he had been treated. In fact Charles, who would not come to the grand vizir's army, at a time when he might have managed it as he thought proper, flew thither, even without attendants, but the peace was made, which removed all his hopes of success from that quarter; and was moreover mortified to find that the vizir would not even come out of his tent to meet him, but only contented himself

himself with sending out two pachas to conduct him into his tent, where reciprocal reproaches were all that passed between them. The conduct of the latter was much approved at Constantinople, and the former was left to combat against his misfortunes.

When the peace was signed, Peter retired by Jassy to the frontiers of his dominions, after having sent his vice-chancellor Shaffiroff and his general Sczemeretoff to Constantinople as hostages for the final execution of the treaty.

The czar lost 60,000 men this campaign without having fought a battle; and was moreover obliged to restore Asoph to the Porte, and to demolish all the forts of Taganroc and Kamienska; which not only limited his power, by depriving him of the navigation of the Black Sea, but the great fatigues and chagrins which he had undergone, had considerably altered his health, so that his physicians ordered him to use the waters of Carlsbadt in Bohemia.

During the time he used these waters, his troops entered Swedish Pomerania, blocked up Stralsund, and took four or five little towns.

This monarch now formed the project of stripping the crown of Sweden of all the provinces which it held in Germany; but for accomplishing this great design it was necessary that he should unite himself with the king of Denmark, and with the electors of Hanover and of Brandenburg. Peter wrote all the articles of the treaty which he projected with these powers himself, and formed

formed all the operations which were necessary to make himself master of Pomerania.

From Carlsbadt the czar went to Dresden, where his son Alexis waited to receive him, to marry the daughter of the duke of Brunswic Wolfenbuttle, and sister to the empress, the wife of the emperor Charles the Sixth.

This marriage was celebrated at Torgau, but never was an union more unfortunate. Catherine, his mother-in-law, did not assist at this marriage; for though she had been for some time regarded as czarina, she had not yet been solemnly acknowledged in this quality. After the marriage of his son, the czar parted immediately for St. Peterbourg, which was now rendered an elegant city, and intended to be the capital of the Russian empire, where he solemnly declared his marriage; and where Catherine, in consideration of her having saved her husband and his army, was publicly received as empress.

The great reformer of the Russian empire now divided his bed and his throne with a person whose history is not yet well understood; but this is well known, that she was a woman whose amiable and great qualities merited every thing the emperor did for her.

The following year, 1713, the czar, having nothing to fear from the Turks, marched in person to the assistance of his ally the king of Denmark, who was attacked by a Swedish army under the command of the famous general Steinbock; which army he beat near Frederickstadt in Holstein, and afterwards made himself master of this town. Another body of his troops bombarded

barded Stettin, which surrendered to prince Mentzikoff, and was afterwards delivered to the king of Prussia in consideration of the sum of 400,000 crowns, of which that prince was in want for the payment of his troops. At the same time another body of Russian troops, joined with those of the elector of Saxony, laid siege to Stralsund, while Peter, after his return to Peterfbourg, went on board a ship of war of fifty guns, and being followed by ninety-two gallies, and 110 half-gallies, which carried 16,000 men, attacked Helsenfors in Finland, and notwithstanding the forces with which the Swedes opposed him, soon made himself master of that place, and as well of Borgo and Abo; the latter of which places was heretofore celebrated for its university; but Peter took all the books which he found there, carried them to St. Peterfbourg, and placed them in the new library which he had founded in this city.

This indefatigable monarch, seeing now the importance of his marine, augmented it considerably this year; and if we may believe the memoirs of those times, he drew by promises and gratifications, during the years 1712 and 1713, more than 18,000 families into his dominions from the different parts of Europe, and by their industry established several manufactures and arts among his people. The following year the prince Galitzin continued the war in Finland, and made himself master of the greatest part of that province; an army of 10,000 Swedes, who opposed him, were beaten, and he thereby extended his conquests over a tract of country of near eighty leagues.

The political part of the world were much puzzled to discover the motive which could have induced the czar, the preceding year, to make such a great augmentation of his marine; but

but at the beginning of this year the cause evidently appeared: the Swedes still kept the sea with a considerable naval force, which continually threatened the new establishments of the Russians, greatly retarded their progress, and might in one day ruin the works of several years: Peter therefore collected a fleet of sixteen ships of the line, and of 180 gallies, which were proper to work through the passages of the rocks and islands upon the Swedish coasts in the Baltic Sea.

With this force, and a body of troops, he parted from St. Petersburg for the island of Aland, at the mouth of the Bothnic Gulph; near which place he met the Swedish fleet, and passed within sight of them: his gallies forced themselves a passage almost under the cannon of the enemy, and landed a great part of their troops in this island. The Swedish rear-admiral Erenskild followed these little vessels with his gallies and prames; but was received with such a violent and constant fire by the Russians, that the greatest part of his soldiers and seamen were killed and wounded, so that he had not men enough left to work his ships, and he himself being covered with wounds was obliged to surrender. The remains of the Swedish fleet retired in great disorder, and the island of Aland fell into the hands of the Russians, who were now become so powerful by sea, that they dared even attack the ancient masters of the Baltic.

The return of the czar to St. Petersburg was celebrated by a triumph; gold medals were distributed to all the officers, and silver ones to the common soldiers and sailors, and the czar was created vice-admiral by the vice-czar Romanodowiki, as a recompence for his services; upon which occasion he pronounced the following discourse, which deserves to be recorded: “ Is
“ there

“ there any one of you, my friends, who would have imagined
“ twenty years past, that he should fight with me upon the Baltic
“ Sea, in ships built by our own countrymen, and that we should
“ have established ourselves in these provinces, subduing every
“ thing by our own fatigues and by our courage? The ancient seat
“ of the sciences was supposed to be in Greece; they afterwards
“ established themselves in Italy; from whence they spread them-
“ selves through the western parts of Europe; it is at present our
“ turn, if you will second my designs, by joining study to obe-
“ dience. The arts circulate in the world, as the blood does in
“ the human body; and it may be they will establish their empire
“ among us, and afterwards return again into Greece, their an-
“ cient country: I dare hope that we shall one day make the
“ most civilized nations blush by our labours and by our solid
“ glory.”

During the course of this year, the czar perceived that he should never be able to bring his son, who had been bred up in all the ancient superstitions and prejudices of the clergy, and of his mother's family, to second his designs; and that after his death every thing would return to the same state it was in before he came to the throne; he therefore published a very important edict, which was to be received with the greatest formality as a fundamental law of the empire, that every father of a family should have authority to name for his heir his eldest son, or if this son should be disobedient, such other as he should please to choose. The emperor had determined to give the example to all his subjects, by submitting himself to this fundamental law of the empire, that his conduct might not afterwards be regarded as capricious.

In the beginning of the year 1715 the czar was in the zenith of his glory; he was in possession of Livonia, Estonia, Ingria, and Carelia, which he regarded as provinces of his empire; he saw with joy his powerful marine, the fruit of his labours, become in less than twelve years capable of disputing the empire of the sea in the Baltic with all the other powers of the North: he was master of Finland, at peace with the Turks, and nothing hindered him from carrying his great designs into execution. Sweden was in the greatest distress, and all the other powers of the North were either his allies or his creatures. Several of the Russian nobility, who were charged with the administration of the finances, were accused of extortion and of injustice: Peter erected a new court of justice to try them, and being found guilty, several of them were condemned to capital punishments.

The czar published this year several new edicts for regulating the marine, and the commerce in the different parts of his dominions, and composed himself a new military code of laws: he founded the marine academy at St. Petersburg; and at the same time laid the foundations of that elegant building and gardens called Peter's Hoff, near the town of St. Petersburg.

During this interval, an army of Danes and of Hanoverians, allies of Russia, formed the siege of Wismar, a large town situated in the duchy of Mecklenbourg, upon the Baltic Sea, which had been for some time before in the possession of the Swedes. The czar parted from St. Petersburg at the head of 20,000 men to press the siege of this town; but before he arrived, the Hanoverians were in the possession of the place, which greatly disappointed him, and made him act afterwards with

much less zeal in the common cause than he had done before, as he intended to have made Wismar a port of retreat for his ships of war on particular occasions, and afterwards to restore it to the Duke Charles of Mecklenbourg, at the same time that he gave him the princess Catherine, eldest daughter of Iwan Alexiowitz his brother, in marriage.

Towards the end of this year the princess, wife of the czarowitz Alexis, was delivered of a prince, who was baptized by the name of Peter, and to whom the emperor gave the title of great duke ; but this princess died soon after her delivery, at the age of twenty-one years, with great resignation, after having been perhaps one of the most unhappy wives in the world ; the brutal and savage character of her husband was beyond even that of the generality of the Russian nation.

Charles the Twelfth having now returned into his own territories, began again to disturb the peace of the North, or rather to endeavour to recover the territories which his enemies had taken from him. He had with great difficulty raised an army of 35,000 men ; and the king of Denmark, whose conduct towards Charles had been very unworthy, with great reason dreaded his resentment ; and to prevent it was preparing to make a descent in Scania ; but with his own feeble forces he could not make head against Charles the Twelfth, who, though his imprudence had been the means of his defeat at Pultawa, was always formidable ; he therefore endeavoured to gain succours from the czar, who was now preparing to travel again into the southern parts of Europe : the king of Denmark met him at Hamburg, and engaged him to furnish him with ships and troops against their common enemy. The czar, in consequence of this request,

sent a fleet with a body of troops to Copenhagen; but he was too good a politician to employ his forces to augment the grandeur and power of the king of Denmark: he acted very slowly, raised objections and difficulties, and at last absolutely desisted from the enterprize upon Scania. Irritated at this conduct, and weary of supporting a body of Russian troops in his kingdom, the king of Denmark began to be suspicious of his ally, separated his troops from the Russians, and put himself in a state of defence. This misunderstanding between the czar and the king of Denmark was soon perceived by the baron De Goertz, minister and confident of Charles the Twelfth, who immediately took the opportunity to make overtures of peace between his master and the czar. This great politician had address enough to persuade this emperor that Sweden was sufficiently humbled, and that he was acting against his own interest to aggrandize the king of Denmark. The czar entered readily into the plan of Goertz, and withdrew his troops from Denmark; but they took up their winter quarters in Mecklenbourg, under pretence of adjusting the disputes which had for some time before divided the prince and the nobility of this country.

Towards the end of the year 1716 the czar, accompanied by the empress Catherine, made a tour through the southern parts of Europe: the first journey of this prince was as a plain individual, to learn the arts; but he made the second as a prince, to penetrate into the secrets of all the courts.

About this time likewise the baron De Goertz began to play off his intrigues, and with the famous cardinal Alberoni, first minister of Spain, attempted to direct and regulate all the affairs of Europe: they pretended not only to terminate by a solid peace

peace the war between Sweden and Russia, to drive Augustus, with whose conduct the czar had great reason to be dissatisfied, out of Poland, and to place Stanislaus again upon the throne, but they proposed to retake Bremen and Verden from George the First, king of England, and even to deprive him of the British crown, which they meant to place upon the head of the Pretender.

Every thing now appeared to favour this great project. Alberoni promised to furnish considerable sums for this purpose; and Goertz carried on intrigues with several courts, and animated the zeal of the partizans of the Pretender. He supposed he should have no difficulty to engage his master to cede a great deal to the czar, to enable him to retake all the rest from his enemies, and to be at liberty to make a descent in Scotland. On the other hand, Alberoni, seeing that there was a good intelligence at this time between the king of Great Britain and the regent of France, and fearing that the latter, who hated Alberoni's intrigues, should be tempted to give any succours to the former, entered into a conspiracy against the regent. This great affair was conducted with such secrecy, that all the parties had strong hopes of its succeeding.

Goertz, in the beginning of the year 1717, was at the Hague, where he had received bills of exchange to a very great amount from Alberoni, together with a full power to act, from the king of Sweden: the party of the Pretender were ready to declare themselves in Scotland, and were to be joined by an army of 10,000 Swedes, commanded by the king himself, as soon as the ports in the Baltic were open, that a fleet could be put to sea. The czar, without knowing all the particulars of this scheme, waited

waited to see the event of it. The Duke of Orleans was the first who acquainted the king of Great Britain with his suspicions of the plan which was formed against him, which were afterwards confirmed by the advices which he received from Holland: soon afterwards a Swedish packet-boat, which carried their letters into Holland, was wrecked upon the coasts of Norway; the letters were taken, and from them the whole plan was disclosed. The king of Denmark immediately sent these letters to London, and thereupon the Swedish minister was arrested, and by his papers it was discovered that he was carrying on a conspiracy against the government. The king of Great Britain immediately dispatched a messenger to Holland to demand, according to the treaties which subsisted between the two powers, that the States General would arrest the baron De Goertz, who was soon after taken at Arnheim with his secretary. The two plenipotentiaries of Charles the Twelfth were interrogated as criminals, one in England, and the other in Holland, notwithstanding most of the courts of Europe murmured loudly against this violation of the privileges of public ministers. The British court, as well as several others, took every method to discover the secret of this conspiracy, but the Swedish ministers would make no confession. At the end of six months they were both set at liberty through the intercession of the czar. Charles the Twelfth, contrary to his natural character, used dissimulation on this occasion, and neither avowed nor disavowed what his ministers had done; and Peter contented himself with publishing a memorial to exculpate himself from having any hand in this transaction against his ally the elector of Hanover, who appeared to be satisfied. It is certain however, that the czar never forgave the king of Great Britain nor the king of Denmark for having deprived him of the town of Wismar; and those
who

who were constantly about his person observed, that he never would suffer that affair to be mentioned to him afterwards.

About the month of May the czar parted from Holland, where he had resided some time, for France, where he was received with all that pomp and parade which is natural to the French nation. Peter, notwithstanding the memorial which he had published, was a little alarmed at the consequences of his having favoured the conspiracy against his ally, George the First, and the principal motive which induced him to pass through Paris was to be better informed of the politics of this court, and to discover upon what terms the regent of France was with George, and whether this latter prince was well fixed upon the throne.

While the czar was at Paris, he proposed to the duke regent of France to be one of the mediators between Russia and Sweden; and that the two empires should enter into a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, into which Spain should likewise be admitted; but the regent consented only to a defensive and a commercial treaty, and accepted the title of mediator which was offered him, and which was also accepted by the elector of Brandenburg. The czar clearly discovered by this measure how much he was dissatisfied with the king of Great Britain. This treaty was signed soon after at the Hague; on which the baron De Goertz treated publicly with the ministers of the czar, and declared that he had full powers to conclude a peace between Russia and Sweden. Peter kept up some appearances in Holland, and would not see Goertz; but as soon as he quitted this state, this minister followed him, and had several long conversations with him upon the road, in which he endeavoured

deavoured to prove, that it would be very easy to remove all the obstacles which might retard the conclusion of the peace between Russia and Sweden : he proposed a marriage between the czar's daughter and the duke of Holstein, and at the same time gave him to understand that the duke might be induced to cede his territories in Holstein for an equivalent ; and that then, being a member of the German empire, he or his descendants might one day likewise mount the Roman imperial throne.

These ideas greatly flattered the ambition of the czar ; however he was politician enough to dissemble his sentiments till the proper time came to declare himself openly : he was likewise no less circumspect when the Duke of Ormond would come to St. Peterbourg, to propose a marriage to him between the Pretender his niece Ann Iwanowna, widow of Frederick William duke of Courland : he sent a public order to this minister to stay at Mittau, but his ministers treated of the affair secretly with an agent of the duke's. In fact, as the czar found Goertz to be a man of talents and a master of political intrigue, he left him to prepare all their batteries without touching them ; he was ready to make peace with Sweden, and afterwards to enter into any measures with Charles against those by whom he imagined he had been counteracted in his ambitious designs ; but he appeared also to be disposed to continue the war, and to be still allied with the kings of Denmark, of Poland, of Prussia, and of Great Britain, though he had great difficulty to restrain his resentment against the latter within any bounds.

In the beginning of the year 1718 the negotiations of the baron De Goertz advanced apace ; every thing appeared to be changing in the North. Goertz proposed the acquisition of Mecklenbourg to the czar. The duke Charles, who was in possession of this
duchy

duchy, had married a daughter of the czar Iwan, Peter's eldest brother; but the nobility of the country were in arms against him, and the czar, who had an army in Mecklenbourg, supported the reigning duke, whom he regarded as his son-in-law. The elector of Hanover had declared for the nobility; so that to ensure Peter this duchy, and to make them powerful in Germany, was a sensible mortification to the elector of Hanover. As an equivalent they gave the duke of Mecklenbourg the duchy of Courland, and a part of Prussia, at the expence of Poland; to the throne of which they proposed to restore the king Stanislaus. Bremen and Verden were to return to Sweden; and as they could not divest George the First of these provinces but by force of arms, the project of Goertz was, as I have already observed, after the peace was concluded between the czar and Charles, to unite these two powers by an offensive alliance, and to send an army into Scotland; and that Charles the Twelfth, after he had conquered Norway, should make a descent with another army in England, upon the throne of which he flattered himself he should be able to place a new king, as he had done in Poland. The cardinal Alberoni promised large subsidies to Charles and to Peter. Alberoni promised likewise to excite a faction in France, to overturn all the measures of the regent, and in fact to force that kingdom into their confederacy. The island of Aland was already proposed as the place where they were to open the conferences in form, which had been already arranged, and where the plenipotentiaries of the two powers were to conclude not only the treaty of peace, but a treaty of offensive alliance, which was to change the face of Europe; when a cannon-ball from one of the bastions of Frederickshal in Normandy killed Charles the Twelfth, and all their mighty projects at once vanished in to air. The baron Goertz was immediately arrested, and beheaded at Stockholm,

holm, and the czar, who was come from Abo in Finland with his guards to be near the conferences, returned to St. Peterfbourg.

After the death of Charles the Twelfth every thing was changed in Sweden: Charles had been despotic, and had thereby nearly ruined his kingdom; and his sister Ulrica was elected queen on condition she would renounce all pretensions to despotic power. The czar would readily have formed a combination with the Swedes against England, and against the rest of his allies; and the new Swedish government united themselves with these allies against the czar. The congress of Aland was dissolved, and the new government of Sweden entered into an alliance with England and with Prussia, hoping by this means that the Russians would be brought to conclude a solid peace. An English fleet was immediately sent into the Baltic, and the Hanoverian troops entered Mecklenbourg: but the czar did not seem to be at all intimidated at the sight of these new enemies; he ordered his fleet to keep the sea, and his troops drove the Hanoverians out of the duchy of Mecklenbourg. Certainly if Sir John Norris had acted with vigour when he joined the Swedish fleet, there would have been no great difficulty in destroying all the czar's marine; but Norris was evidently sent into the Baltic merely for parade, and rather did hurt to the Swedish affairs than afforded them any succours.

The following year was productive of an event which greatly eclipsed the glory of the czar, and which various historians and politicians have endeavoured to unravel, but I believe without success; I mean the condemnation of the czarowitz Alexis. Much has been said upon this occasion to blacken the characters

ters of the czar and of the czarina ; I wish they may be found innocent of what has been laid to their charge, from the following account, which, as far as I can discover, is a true one. In the year 1689, the czar Peter, when he was only seventeen years of age, married Eudoxia Lapukin, a princess who had been educated in all the prejudices of her country, and whose character was naturally superstitious, so that the greatest opposition which he met with when he would reform the brutal character of his people, and make them think and act like rational beings, arose from his wife, who was entirely governed by the ignorant monks and clergy of his country, and to whom all the useful changes which Peter was making in the empire appeared so many sacrileges. At length, fatigued with her continual complaints, which encouraged the advocates of the ancient usages, and no less with her loose and disorderly behaviour, the czar resolved to be divorced from her, and shut her up in the convent of Susdal towards the end of the year 1690, where he made her assume the habit of a nun, under the name of Helen.

The son whom she brought the czar this year was unhappily born with the character which had rendered his mother so disagreeable, and his education was entrusted to monks and superstitious people, whose prejudices he never surmounted. It was in vain that his father endeavoured to correct the first impressions he received, by giving him foreigners for his preceptors : their being strangers was sufficient to disgust him, and to make him reject their instructions. All the discontented part of the nation, and particularly the clergy, and his mother's relations, continued to govern him, and persuaded him that almost all the people looked upon the enterprizes of the czar his father with horror, and that he could not hope to please them, but by shew-

ing his aversion to all these changes: these insinuations made him complain openly against the innovations which his father was making. The marriage of the czar with Catherine, and the children whom he had by her, was another grievance of which his mother, her family, and all the clergy, loudly complained, and contributed very much to precipitate Alexis into extravagances. Nevertheless, to draw his son out of these prejudices, and to give more reasonable ideas and sentiments, the czar placed him for a year at the head of the regency, afterwards ordered him to make the tour of Europe, to see the manners and customs of other states; and in the year 1711 married him to a princess of Brunswick, a very amiable and beautiful young lady.

But being born and bred a real Russian, all the instructions which he had received, instead of reforming him, made him still worse. He now gave himself up to all kinds of debauchery and brutality; he was constantly surrounded by superstitious priests and ill counsellors, who procured him a young Finland woman for his mistress; he despised and ill treated his wife, because she was a stranger, and often kept her without common necessities, so that she died of grief in the year 1715, after having been delivered of a son, who, according to the natural order of succession, was to be one day heir to the throne.

Chagrined at the loss of his daughter-in-law, and troubled to see that the fruit of all his labours would be lost if his son, who was to reign after him, was not corrected and drawn out of his debauched and brutal course of life, the czar wrote a letter to him, which was no less pathetic than menacing, and which concluded in the following manner: " I will wait a
" little

“ little longer to see if you will change your manner of living ;
 “ if not, be assured that I will deprive you of the succession,
 “ as being unworthy of it. I would not have you imagine that I
 “ only mean to intimidate you, neither would I have you depend
 “ too much upon the title of being my only son ; for if I do
 “ not spare my own life for the good of my people and for
 “ the glory of my country, how can you suppose that I will
 “ spare you ? I will rather leave the succession to a stranger
 “ who has merited it, than to my own son who has rendered
 “ himself unworthy of it.”

I have already observed that the czar, some years before, had
 established it as one of the fundamental laws of the empire, that
 every father of a family had a right to constitute his eldest son to
 be his successor, or, if he thought proper, he might leave his
 succession to any other person ; and from this law the czar
 supposed he had an absolute and a legal right to dispose of the
 empire to whom he thought proper. It had been customary
 before this time for the czars to appoint their successors by their
 testaments ; but this ancient custom was now established as a
 fundamental law of the empire.

The czar wrote a second letter to his son some time afterwards
 in still stronger and more pathetic terms, in which, among other
 things, he observed, that “ if you reject my advice while I am
 “ living, how will you regard it after I am dead ? I am per-
 “ suaded you have at times a desire to be faithful, and to hearken
 “ to my advice ; but those people with long beards turn you as
 “ they think proper, and force you to act otherwise, as all their
 “ dependence is upon you.” This letter concluded in the
 following manner : “ Correct your course of life, and render
 “ yourself

“ yourself worthy of the succession, or immediately take the
 “ habit of a monk, otherwise I shall be obliged to treat you as a
 “ criminal.”

To all these remonstrances Alexis made no other answer to his father, than that he would renounce the succession and become a monk.

About this time the czar and the czarina parted from St. Petersbourg to make the tour which they afterwards made through the southern parts of Europe; but they were scarcely arrived in Germany, before they were informed that Alexis was constantly in consultation with the discontented party: he seized this opportunity to consult with these people; who perceiving that there was no method of exciting a revolt in the empire, and from prediction of one of their bishops, supposing that the emperor had not long to live, counselled him to put himself under the protection of the emperor Charles the Sixth, his brother-in-law, till the death of his father, who had now wrote to him again, that he must immediately choose a convent or a throne, and if he hoped one day to succeed him, he must join him immediately: on which the prince parted from St. Petersbourg under pretence of joining his father, but he directed his course towards Vienna, where it was not thought political to keep him; and afterwards hid himself at Naples, with his mistress, his confessor, his interpreter, and two or three officers of his household.

Peter, informed of the place of his son's retreat, wrote him a letter from Spa nearly in the following words: “ I write to
 “ you now, for the last time, to tell you that you are to obey

“ my will immediately, which Romanzoff and Tolstoi will
“ explain to you. If you obey me, I assure you, and promise
“ before God, that I will not punish you; and that, if you
“ return immediately, I will love you more than ever: but
“ if you do not do it, as your father, by virtue of the power
“ that I have received from God, I will give you my eternal
“ curse; and, as your sovereign, I do assure you that I shall
“ find means of punishing you, in which I hope God will
“ assist me, and take my just cause in hand.”

In consequence of this letter the prince returned to Moscow, where his father then was, and fell on his knees before him. A long conversation next ensued, so that a report was spread in the town that the father and the son were reconciled, and that every thing was forgotten; but the next day all the guards were ordered under arms as soon as the day appeared; the great bell of Moscow was tolled, as if something solemn was approaching; all the nobility, ministers, and clergy were assembled, and Alexis was conducted as a prisoner before his father, who declared him unworthy to reign, and made him sign, not only a confession of his faults, but also his renunciation of the throne: on which all the assembly took an oath never to support the czarowitz, even supposing that there should be no other person of the royal family existing. The czar likewise by another act declared his second son Peter, whom he had by the empress Catherine, to be his successor, and all the assembly took another oath to support him. All these acts were afterwards read publicly in the cathedral, where all the ecclesiastics likewise signed and approved attested copies of them.

It is very natural to suppose that the czar, after having deprived his son of the succession, would naturally, from a principle of paternal kindness, give him his life, especially as he had not been guilty of any open act of rebellion, and as he had promised him, by the letter which he wrote him from Spa, that if he would return and obey him he should not be punished; but to the astonishment of all mankind, after all that had passed, Alexis was tried as a criminal and condemned to die; but his judges recommended him to the clemency of his father. It is true, various persons appeared at the trial, and deposed that a great part of the nation were attached to the ancient manners and customs of the country, were discontented with the government and the changes which the czar was making daily; that they had declared openly, that their whole dependence was upon Alexis to overturn every thing that the czar had done; that this prince had held several conversations with his mother and the czar's sister Mary, who were in hopes that through his means they should gain their liberty; that the bishop of Rostow had foretold the czar's death, and that Alexis had quitted the kingdom to be out of danger till that event happened; and that the prince himself had declared to some of his friends, "that the bad
" treatment which he had constantly received, without having
" merited it, obliged him to leave the kingdom, especially as
" he feared being shut up in a convent; for, said he, those who
" shut up my mother in this kind of prison are desirous of
" treating me in the same manner; but I will put myself under
" the protection of a great prince, and I desire that you will not
" abandon me at present."

All these, with many other accusations of this nature, did not prove any project digested, any intrigue concerted, or any conspiracy

spiracy or association actually formed: it was only a son, who had been educated in a superstitious and brutal manner, discontented and depraved, who complained of his father for doing what he believed, or had been taught to believe, was not right; who avoided his company, and who wished for his death to undo what his father had done. He thought his mother had been treated in a most barbarous and cruel manner, and wished to deliver her out of her prison. The czar himself had greatly contributed to his son's bad conduct by not having him educated in a proper manner.

Considering the great utility of the czar's projects, and the great advantages which would evidently accrue from them to the whole empire, the prince's conduct would justly authorize his being disinherited and shut up in a convent; but condemning him to death was barbarous and tyrannical, as he had not been guilty of any act which by the laws of God, or by any laws then subsisting in the empire, merited such a punishment. It could not be supposed that he was endeavouring to raise a rebellion against his father or his government, when he quitted the kingdom, as soon as he thought he could do it with safety, and attempted to hide himself at Naples.

As soon as the sentence of death was pronounced upon the prince, wherein were the following words, "The divine, ecclesiastical, civil, and military laws condemn to death, without mercy, all those whose attempts against their father and their sovereign are manifest," he fell into the most violent convulsions, from which it was with the greatest difficulty that he regained a little interval of sense, during which he desired

his father would come to see him, when he asked his pardon, and died soon afterwards.

It did not appear that the prince had ever made any attempt against his father ; and none but Russian judges could ever have supposed, that when a man left his country to avoid doing what he had been taught to believe was not right, and returned again upon a promise of being pardoned, that he had been guilty of homicide. This act has sullied the glory of Peter more than all the bad things he ever did in his life. Many infamous scribblers have asserted that the prince died of poison, which was given him by his mother-in-law, who, together with the prince Mentzikoff, likewise the declared enemy of the prince, was fearful that after the death of Peter, Alexis would find partizans, and endeavour, notwithstanding his forced renunciation, to mount the throne, to the exclusion of the prince Peter, Catherine's son ; and for this reason they never ceased, say these scribblers, to excite the czar, naturally vindictive, to push things to the last extremity.

But nothing can be more false than this accusation : the prince was suddenly attacked before the whole court when the sentence was pronounced upon him, and there was no person present who was not convinced of the cause of his death. It is true, that both Catherine and Mentzikoff were hated by the prince, and openly threatened with destruction if ever he came to the throne ; so that they would have been justified in some measure, if they had persuaded Peter to pursue violent measures ; but the contrary is clearly proved by the czar's own words ; for this prince declared to the duke of Holstein, that Catherine
(who

(who was naturally humane, and had little of the Russian brutality in her composition) had frequently begged him not to suffer the sentence of condemnation to be pronounced upon his son, and intreated him to be contented with shutting him up in a convent, and making him take the habit of a monk, because, said she, the opprobrium of this sentence of death will likewise affect your grandson.

Moreover Peter had often threatened to disinherit his son before Catherine had any children; and even at this time her son was in a very infirm state of health, and died soon after. During the reign of Peter the Second, the son of Alexis, when Mentzikoff was exiled to Siberia, his greatest enemies had not even the least suspicion of his having in any degree contributed to the tragical scene here recited.

Peter the First was not a person to be advised in a matter of this moment; and all the reasonable part of mankind, who were instructed in this matter, were convinced that the czar, when he saw that his son would not come into his measures, and that all the changes which he had made, and all the pains which he had taken to draw his subjects out of a state of barbarity, would be counteracted and overturned if ever Alexis came to the crown, formed of himself the violent resolutions which he afterwards carried into execution. His letter to his son from Spa, in which he promises to pardon his faults, and to love him more than ever, if he would return, was evidently calculated to deceive him, and to get him into his power; and, considering the consequences, was one of the most wicked acts that ever a father was guilty of towards his child.

Upon the whole, it clearly appears that this young man fell sacrifice to the wrong education his father had given him, as he was desirous that this son should adopt the great plan which he had formed. The attempting to force his son to pursue measures which the latter had been taught to believe were contrary to the divine laws, was barbarous and tyrannical beyond measure. Certain it is, that ambition and the desire of glory made Peter reform his country, for which his name will be always revered; but it is equally certain that he committed more atrocious and tyrannical acts than any prince who ever sat upon the throne of the Russias.

At the same time that Peter was condemning his son to death, he was taking the most vigilant measures to carry the great projects of the reformation into execution. He established a general police in all the empire, which was under the direction of a lieutenant-general, who resided at St. Petersburg, at the head of a tribunal which was to watch over and regulate the police of the whole empire. Schools for teaching arithmetic were now established in all the great towns, which were also cleared of those crowds of sturdy beggars with whom they were before much infested, and who are a nuisance to all well-regulated societies.

At St. Petersburg, the nobility and rich merchants were obliged to build regular stone or brick houses, according to their fortunes; and all the waggons, carts, or boats, which came empty from the neighbouring provinces, were obliged to bring materials for building free of all expences. An uniformity of weights and measures, and of the common law, was fixed and established throughout the whole empire: the prices of all the
common

common necessaries of life were regulated and settled: the streets were paved.

Peter, during the last journey which he made into the southern parts of Europe, engaged great numbers of mechanics, in almost every branch of art and manufacture, to come and establish themselves in his dominions. He instituted a college of commerce, of which the one half of the members were Russians, and the other half strangers, to the end that all his new manufacturers and artists might be justly treated. Some French people, who were particularly protected by Mentzikoff, established the manufactures of tapestry, and of gold and silver lace;—other emigrants from Brabant and Juliers established a large manufacture of linens at Moscow;—and Peter gave 30,000 roubles, and provided all the materials and instruments necessary for the establishing the manufactures of the different kinds of woollen cloths in his dominions, whereby he was soon enabled to clothe his troops with his own manufactures, which he was before obliged to buy in foreign countries. Peter likewise established a manufacture of silk, in which the Persian raw silk was manufactured as well as at Ispahan. He procured some miners from Sweden, and made great improvements in his iron works; and in working his iron mines in Siberia, mines of gold and silver were discovered, and a college of mines was erected.

This extraordinary prince was not content with naming inspectors and giving particular instructions for making so many different arts and manufactures flourish in his dominions, but at the first establishment he would see every thing with his own eyes, and even work at them with his own hands.

In

In the beginning of the year 1719 he formed the plan for the canal of Ladoga, which was to open a communication between the river Newa and the Walchowa, to bring merchandize to St. Peterfbourg without passing through the great lake Ladoga, which was often violently agitated by tempests, so that its navigation was very dangerous and often impracticable. He began this great undertaking, which at that time was thought impossible, by breaking the earth himself. Almost at the same time he began the great canal and dry docks of Cronftadt, and laid the foundation of the new town of Ladoga.

Towards the end of this year he began likewise the great canal between the Wolga and the lake Ilmen, and made a free navigation between the Ilmen and the Ladoga; so that by this means he opened a communication between the Caspian and Baltic seas.

This year he sent several mathematicians whom he drew out of his academy, into the different parts of the empire to make exact charts of all his dominions, and to give him a particular account of the state of the country. All these improvements which the czar had been making were only as so many preparatives to the great object which he had in view, namely, the making Russia a commercial state and a naval power. He perceived that great riches and elegance had been brought into England, France, and Holland by their extensive commerce and improvements in the arts, and he wished to see Russia in the same situation. At this time the Swedes and Danes were the masters of the commerce of the Baltic; and though the iron of the Russian dominions was equal in every respect to that of Sweden,

Sweden, he saw the latter supplying almost all Europe with her bar-iron, while the mines of the former remained unworked.

When Peter came to the throne the commerce of the Russian dominions, except what the English and Hollanders carried on at Archangel, was entirely destroyed. The destruction of Novogorod had annihilated it in that part of Russia, as the conquests of Tamerlane, towards the end of the fourteenth century, had done in the southern parts. Before this æra the southern parts of Russia were as a kind of magazine for the merchandizes and manufactures of Greece and India: the Dnieper and the Don were the canals for transporting the productions of Asia; but after the country was conquered by the Tartars, and when the Turks became masters of Asoph, this branch of commerce was entirely destroyed. The Armenians, who are the factors of this part of Asia, were received some time before into Astracan; the Russians were obliged to leave this branch of commerce to pass through their hands, and to permit them to receive all the advantages of it; but Peter soon after remedied this inconveniency by making a treaty with the king of Persia, by which all the silk which was not used in the manufactures of Persia should be delivered to the Armenians of Astracan, to be by them transported into Russia.

The opening a commerce with China appeared to Peter to be an object of still greater consequence. Two immense empires which bordered the one upon the other, and which possessed reciprocally several kinds of merchandizes that were necessary for their consumption, could not fail of being extremely useful to each other by forming a mercantile correspondence, especially

as their several interests had been regulated and fixed by a solemn treaty in the year 1689. The foundation of this commerce was laid in the year 1654 by some merchants of Siberia, who sent caravans to the borders of China, and made great profits; but the quarrels which arose afterwards between the two empires greatly disfranged these enterprizes. After the peace of 1689, overtures were again made to the emperor of China for the re-establishment of this commerce, and for liberty to form a kind of magazine in China, in which the Russian merchandizes might be deposited, and the emperor readily granted a little suburb of Pekin for that purpose. The caravans were generally two years and a half, and some times more, in going to Pekin and returning. The prince of Gagarin, governor of Siberia, was twenty years at the head of this commerce. The caravans were often very numerous, and it was very difficult to keep the populace, who composed the greatest part of those who were their guards, in good order: they sometimes insulted the inhabitants of the countries through which they passed, and often even the Chinese themselves; so that this commerce was much incommoded by their bad conduct: the emperor of China threatened to forbid the caravans from entering into his territories if they did not immediately correct these disorders. This commerce was very advantageous to the Russians, who sold the European merchandizes at a very high price at Pekin, and received a great balance in gold, silver, and precious stones. The taxes and vexations which the prince Gagarin laid upon this commerce, which had enriched him, greatly diminished it, and at length were the cause of his destruction; he was accused, in consequence of these exactions, before the chamber of justice established by the czar, and was beheaded for his bad conduct.

Peter

Peter concluded a new treaty this year with the emperor of China, by which it was stipulated, that to avoid the disorders which had been heretofore occasioned by the caravan-guards, the caravans in future should only come to the frontiers of the two empires, and that only the factors, dispatched in the name of the sovereign of Russia, should be permitted to enter into Peking, where they were to be lodged in a large palace which the emperor had appointed for that purpose. It was several years after before any caravan or factor of the crown parted for China, and this branch of commerce, even to this day, is in a very languishing situation, not one tenth part of what it was about the year 1718.

Whenever the sovereign interferes in commercial affairs, the subject is seldom any great gainer by such interference, and is not desirous of risking any considerable capital under the direction of a power by which he may be deprived of all the fruits of his labours in a moment. The natural and tyrannical disposition of the Russian nobility, and those who have the direction of commercial matters in this empire, is such, that, except in those places that are under the eye of the sovereign, and where they are as a check upon each other, they would soon destroy the best established commerce.

The commerce of the Baltic, which has since been carried on to such an amazing extent, was entirely planned, and in some measure carried into execution, by Peter the First.

In the last years of his reign more than 300 sail of ships came into the port of St. Peterbourg. It is true, the commerce of Archangel was thereby considerably diminished; but this was

what Peter desired, because Archangel was too far distant from the greatest part of the commercial nations, and the navigation dangerous and often impracticable : moreover a commerce which is carried on under the eyes of the sovereign, who has made it one of the great objects of his policy, will always be more advantageous than when the same efforts are exerted to carry it on at a distance, especially in such a nation as Russia. The commerce of Riga, and of all the other sea-port towns of Livonia, was considerably augmented by the useful regulations which Peter made in the political œconomy of this province.

But this extraordinary genius determined to make a general reform in his empire ; and, considering the momentary duration of human life, resolved not to lose an hour of the time that Providence had allotted him ; and while he was increasing the extent of his dominions and civilizing his people, he was at the same time laying the plan for a new code of laws for their better government.

Before his time the laws of Russia were in a very imperfect state, and rather calculated for the Calmoucks or for the Hottentots than for reasonable beings. During his travels Peter had collected materials for forming a new code of laws ; but he soon found that this was a work which required more time and application than he had to spare, considering the variety of other objects which he had constantly in view ; he therefore resolved to correct the abuses of the old laws, and to make some improvements of them : but this was like putting a new piece of cloth upon an old garment ; or rather like the man who built his house upon the sand.

Peter

Peter collected great and useful instructions for forming his new laws from England, France, some parts of Germany, and Denmark; and took such parts of the laws of these nations respectively as he thought were reasonable and just: but the Russians had not yet learnt the signification of the word reason; and even the czar himself at times had but very imperfect ideas of it; it is therefore not to be wondered that his new code should be like good and wholesome meat dressed with most wretched and unpalatable sauce.

At this time the supreme court of justice, which decided of all civil affairs, was composed of a certain number of the nobility, who were as ignorant as they were arbitrary and brutal; it was rank and birth alone which could give any person a right to sit in this court; but Peter saw that some science was necessary in the decision of judicial affairs, and therefore this court was dissolved. The czar now created an attorney-general, to whom he added four assistants, who were charged to watch over the conduct of the judges in each of the governments of the empire, whose sentences were to be examined in cases of appeal, in the last resource, by a senate which he at the same time established. Every one of these judges was to be provided with a copy of that code of laws which was published by the father of Peter, together with the additions and changes which he thought necessary, before his new code was composed. These judges, as well as all the officers of the courts of justice, had fixed salaries, which were paid out of the public treasures; and they were absolutely forbidden to receive any other emoluments of what nature soever. The greatest part of these regulations were made in the year 1718, while he was carrying on the solemn process against his son.

The causes of particular persons were tried by the governor of the province where they resided and his assessors; afterwards there was an appeal to the senate, and from thence to the czar himself; but if any person, after having been condemned by the senate, appealed to the czar, he was declared worthy of death if his appeal was unjust; however, to soften in some measure the rigour of this law, so tyrannical in itself, he created a master of requests, who received the memorials of all who had either in the senate, or in any of the inferior courts, affairs respecting which the laws were not yet properly explained.

In the year 1721 he finished what he called his new code of laws, which, in fact, was rather composed of new regulations for his courts of justice than for the decisions of judicial matters, which were left chiefly upon the old footing; and yet he forbade, under pain of death, any of the judges to deviate from it, and to substitute their particular opinion to any general law, how absurd soever it were. This terrible order was made a fundamental order of the state, and is still observed in all their courts of justice, and is often the cause of great confusion and injustice. He regulated likewise rank among all his subjects, according to their respective employments, without having any regard to their birth.

Peter had always an idea that a man of merit was preferable to another who was descended from noble ancestors, and he took every method to make his subjects adopt the same mode of thinking: rank therefore was likewise fixed among the women, and whenever a woman took a place in an assembly which was not assigned to her, she was obliged to pay a fine. A common soldier, who by his merit had become an officer, was likewise

likewise become a gentleman; and a nobleman, who was condemned by a court of justice for any crime, lost all his rank.

The great project which the czar had always in view was to make a general reform in his dominions, and to place his subjects, who were at that time more barbarous than the Calmoucks or the Tartars are at present, upon a footing with those of the most civilized nations. The design was undoubtedly a noble one, but it was too magnificent to be executed by any one man, who, notwithstanding his great parts, was naturally brutal, violent, and tyrannical. Many have supposed, that if he had been less severe and less violent he would not have so well succeeded among a people so barbarous and untractable; and I am persuaded there is a great deal of reason in the observation; but notwithstanding all this, no sovereign has a right to sacrifice even the meanest of his subjects by *ex post facto* laws, because some general good may arise from it; and, to judge humanely of the matter, all the great advantages which Peter procured for the Russian nation are not sufficient to counter-balance the abominable scenes of oppression and tyranny which he practised towards some thousands of his innocent subjects.

The czar was not content with reforming his subjects in what regarded their civil and military governments, but he likewise undertook to reform the ecclesiastical government, and to correct the abuses which had been introduced through the ignorance, avarice, and superstition of the clergy. He had some time before abolished the patriarchal dignity, which had made a great part of the clergy his enemies: he was desirous of making the civil government absolute in every respect, and wished to see

see the ecclesiastical administration respected, and at the same time obedient. His design was to have the patriarchal office executed by a college of ecclesiastics, which was always to subsist, but at the same time to depend upon the sovereign, so that they were not to establish any laws for the government of the church, which had not been approved by the chief of the state, of which the church was a part.

He was assisted in this great enterprize by the archbishop of Novogorod, one of the most learned and prudent prelates at that time in all the Russian dominions; and in the years 1718 and 1719, assisted by the counsel of this prelate, he established a perpetual synod, composed of twelve members, who were the best instructed among the dignified clergy, and who were all chosen by the sovereign: this college has since been augmented to fourteen. The czar has explained his motives for establishing this synod in the following terms, “because we have nothing
“to fear under the administration of such a college of ecclesiastics:
“the government of one ecclesiastic has often occasioned troubles
“and confusion in the empire, because the people, always
“inclined to superstition, may, by seeing the chief of the state
“on one side, and the chief of the church on the other, imagine
“that there are two governments in the same state.” This idea was much inculcated formerly in the Greek and even in the Latin church, upon the allegory of the two swords which were found with the apostles; but the absurdity of this application must evidently appear to all mankind. The czar invested this college with the ecclesiastical right of regulating the discipline and examining the manners and capacity of those who were by the sovereign named to bishoprics, and with the right of judging finally in all religious cases where there was formerly an appeal
to

to the patriarch; they were likewise to take cognizance of the revenues of the monasteries, and of the distributions of charities.

This college had the title of the Most Holy Synod, a title which was before given to the patriarch; and all its members took an oath to obey the sovereign, which oath was never taken by the patriarchs: they had likewise the rank of senators. The synod presented to the czar those whom they judged to be the most worthy to be advanced to ecclesiastical dignities when there was a bishopric vacant, and he chose one to fill up this vacancy, who was afterwards consecrated by the synod: Peter often presided himself in this assembly.

In the Greek church all who are raised to ecclesiastical dignities are chosen out of the different orders of Monks. In the first ages of Christianity some became Monks through devotion, and others through fanaticism; and as there was then a persecution in the church, they retired into deserts and secret places, from whence they were afterwards drawn by St. Basil, and from him received several regulations for their conduct, made vows, and were afterwards regarded as the last order of the hierarchy, or the first step to be taken by those who would rise to church dignities. Thus were the Monks first established in Greece and in Asia. Russia, as well as some other parts of Europe, had adopted this regulation, and the state was heavily burdened with these priests, who were rich and powerful; and though ignorant, when Peter came to the crown they were the only order of the state who could read: they were extremely astonished and scandalized at seeing the innovations of all kinds which Peter was making, and began to make use of the little
7 knowledge

knowledge which they had to counteract his designs; so that he was obliged in the year 1703 to publish an order to forbid any ink or pens being given to the Monks, except by the permission of their superiors, who were to be answerable for the conduct of those to whom this privilege was granted. The emperor, with the consent of the synod, made a regulation, that no person should enter upon a monastic course of life till he had passed thirty years of age; and that military men, and those who cultivated the earth, should not be admitted into a convent without an express order from the emperor or from the synod: no married man was permitted to enter into a monastery, even after he was divorced from his wife, except that she likewise became a Nun by her consent, and that they had no children: no person who was in the service of the state was permitted to become a Monk, except by express permission: every Monk was obliged to work at some trade with his own hands: the Nuns were never to be permitted to go out of their respective convents; they took their last vows only when they were arrived to the fiftieth year of their age, agreeably to the regulations of the primitive church; and if before that time they were desirous of being married, they were permitted and even exhorted to do it. The emperor likewise ordered, that all the Nuns should be employed in different kinds of work which were proper for their sex. The empress Catherine procured several persons from Brabant and Flanders, whom she distributed in different convents, to instruct them in the various branches of needle-work.

But Peter, willing to push on his reformation as much as possible, and to reduce the ecclesiastical discipline in many respects to the same state that it was in during the primitive ages
of

of Christianity, combated with all his might against the laziness of a monastic life, and not only ordered that they should all work and be of some use to the society from which they received their subsistence, but he ordered that their principal occupation should be to serve the poor; and therefore it was ordained that all the old and invalid soldiers who had served their country, should be distributed in the different convents, and that some of the monks should be appointed to the care of them; that the strongest and most robust of these monks should cultivate the land belonging to the convent; and even among the nuns he ordered that the strongest and most healthy of them should take care of their gardens, and that the others should attend the sick who should be brought from the neighbourhood into the convents.

The discipline of the clergy of the Greek church is in many respects very different from that of the clergy of the Latin church. As soon as a man enters into holy orders in the Latin church, marriage is absolutely interdicted to him; on the contrary in the Greek church, as soon as he is ordained a deacon, he is obliged to take a wife, agreeably to what St. Paul said to Timothy, "That a deacon should be the husband of one wife;" he may become priest and archdeacon in the married state; but for what superstitious reason I cannot discover, to become a bishop he must be a widower and a monk.

Peter likewise absolutely forbid all the parochial clergy and curates to employ more than one of their children in their respective churches, except their parishioners demanded it themselves; to the end that the clergy might not tyrannize over the people by their numerous families.

At the same time that the czar was making this great reformation among all ranks and orders of men in his dominions, the war was still carrying on against Sweden till the year 1721, when the prince of Hesse, who had married the sister of Charles the Twelfth, and was become king of Sweden, demanded a suspension of arms, but the czar would not consent to it till the peace, which was afterwards concluded at Neustadt, a little town in Finland, was ready to be signed: he had a great army in Finland, and his fleet continually threatened the Swedish coasts, so that they were obliged to make the peace as he had dictated it. Sweden ceded to Russia for ever all the provinces of Livonia, Estonia, Ingria, the greatest part of Carelia, and the town of Wibourg, together with all the neighbouring islands.

This great cession, which contained an extent of country near 300 leagues long, and 100 broad, the fruit of twenty years war, secured the czar the dominion of the Baltic, and has opened the trade of the extensive territories of Russia in such a manner, that it must one day reduce that of Sweden to very narrow limits; the Russians at present make a much greater quantity of bar-iron than is made in Sweden, and as the price of labour is much cheaper in the territories of the former, than in those of the latter, the trade of the latter, especially that of iron, which is her chief support, must constantly decrease, whilst that of the former will be daily increasing.

Peter was highly pleased with this treaty, signed the tenth of September 1721, which at once delivered him from his enemies, opened a door for the trade of his extensive dominions, and at the same time left him entirely at liberty to continue the reformation of his empire, which he had already so far advanced, and

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to make the arts, manufactures, and commerce, which had been introduced by his labour and care, to flourish in it.

The exchange of prisoners was made soon afterwards, and the Russian troops quitted Poland, the provinces of Sweden which they occupied, and the duchy of Mecklenbourg; but the emperor a body of troops in Courland, to secure the possession of it for the duchess Ann Iwanowna his niece. It was during the pompous triumphs which were made upon this occasion, that the senate and the synod gave Peter the titles of Great, of Emperor, and of Father of his Country.

The vast extent of the Russian empire is such, that it must necessarily have political interests and contests with the Swedes, the Poles, the Turks, the Chinese, and the Persians, with many other little states upon which it borders.

During the reigns of the former dukes and czars this empire had been successively ravaged by the Tartars, the Swedes, and the Poles, but under the reign of Peter the Great it became formidable to all these nations. In a state of tranquillity on the side of Turkey and of China, and his new conquests secured by the Peace of Neustadt, Peter turned his attention towards Persia, which was then greatly weakened and ravaged by her intestine wars. Husein Shah, a descendent of the great Shah Abbas, then occupied the throne of Persia, but as he gave himself entirely up to the pleasures of his seraglio and to indolence, his ministers, who were his eunuchs, committed all kinds of injustice and cruelties among his people.

In such a despotic government as this, a weak and debauched prince, who is always surrounded with infamous and wicked ministers, and a powerful and enterprising subject, is sufficient to plunge a kingdom into the greatest confusion and horror. Myr Weis, who was employed to collect the tributes of the province of Daghistan, a bold and enterprising man, declared that he was inspired by Mahomet to deliver the Persians from the state of slavery into which they were plunged, and immediately raised the standard of rebellion: he massacred the prince of Candahar, seized upon the town, and upon the treasures of the sovereign, and forced the Afghans, the bravest of all the Persian militia, to take an oath of fidelity to him: with the Afghan militia he beat the troops which Hussein sent against him, and remained master of Candahar till the year 1717, when he died.

His brother succeeded him in the government of this province, but his son Myr Mahmoud, who inherited all the enterprising boldness of his father, assassinated his uncle, and became a conqueror. On the other hand the Albanians descended from their mountains, and ravaged all the flat country which extends itself from the western side of the Caspian Sea to Derbent, and did not spare even the rich town of Shamachi, where a company of Russian merchants had established themselves, who were all massacred, and their magazines destroyed.

Upon this Peter sent to the Shah of Persia to demand satisfaction; but Hussein was not in a situation to give it; and as Mahmoud would not do it, the czar resolved to do himself justice; and in consequence of this resolution, after having sounded the depths of the water on the western coasts of the Caspian Sea, he parted from St. Petersburg with the empress Catherine,

Catherine, and an army of 22,000 infantry, 9000 dragoons, 15,000 Cofacks, and 3000 marines; this army soon after arrived at Astracan; from whence the dragoons marched by land through the passages of the mountains, where 300 men, if they had been properly posted, were in a situation to stop the march of 100,000; the infantry were put on board transports prepared upon the Caspian Sea for this expedition, and having coasted along the western shore of this sea for eighty leagues, they arrived at Derbent in Armenia, upon the borders of Daghistan, of which the governor would not make any defence, but came immediately and presented the keys to the czar. The conquest of this town finished the campaign: the emperor left a garrison in it of 15,000 men, commanded by general Matulkin, and returned to Moscow.

The conquest of Derbent gave great inquietude to the Ottoman Porte, who were apprehensive that the czar had a design upon Georgia; and in consequence a divan was assembled, where it was unanimously resolved to declare war against Russia; but the rupture between the two empires was afterwards accommodated without coming to extremities. Shah Houssein was soon afterwards dethroned, and his son Thamaseb driven out of his capital, and fled before the usurper Mahmoud. In this situation he entered into a treaty with the czar, by which he ceded to him the towns of Derbent and of Baku, together with the provinces of Gkilan, Mazanderan, and Afterabath, in perpetuity, on condition that he marched into Persia at the head of an army to protect him against the usurper Mahmoud. The Shah of Persia accomplished his part of the treaty, but the emperor of Russia never fulfilled his.

When

When Peter returned into his dominions from his Persian expedition, he found great abuses had been introduced into the administration of the government. Mentzikoff was supposed to have been the author of them; but on enquiring into the cause, the vice-chancellor Schaffiroff fell the victim, being accused of having in an arbitrary manner given his brother a title and appointments without the knowledge of the emperor or of the senate; of having by his own authority, as being the chief director of the post-office, augmented the postage of letters, and embezzled the money; of having concealed 200,000 ducats in specie, and 70,000 in jewels, arising from the confiscation of the property of prince Gagarin, though he had himself signed the edict of the emperor, which ordered all who had any effects of this criminal in their hands to declare it; and of having uttered every kind of contumely against the senators when they were in full senate, which was prohibited on pain of death: Schaffiroff was condemned to be beheaded, but the emperor afterwards gave him his life, and sent him into Siberia.

This year 1723 the emperor likewise convened a great synod, at which almost all the dignified clergy of Russia attended, and proposed to them to abolish several abuses and superstitious practices which had been at different times introduced into the church, and which dishonoured their religion; and though many of the dignified clergy were still much attached to their ancient superstitions, they conformed their decisions to his opinion, which was the rule of their conduct. Nevertheless the decisions of the synod, although supported by the imperial edicts, met with a powerful opposition. Many of the monks and others, at the head of whom was the printer of the court, publicly declared that Peter was

was the Antichrist ; but these fanatics were severely punished for their imprudence.

In the beginning of the year 1724 Peter entered into an alliance with Sweden, to support the rights of the duke of Holstein to the duchy of Sleswick ; sent for this prince to St. Peterbourg, and promised to give him Ann Petrowna his eldest daughter in marriage : he founded the academy of sciences at St. Peterbourg ; and as if he felt that his end was approaching, he crowned his wife, the empress Catherine, with great solemnity at Moscow, in presence of the duchess of Courland, his niece, and of the duke of Holstein, whom he intended should be his son-in-law, which he declared was in consideration of the great services which he had done the state, particularly in the war against the Turks, when his army, as he said, was reduced to 22,000 men, and when he had more than 250,000 to contend with. Nothing appeared in the order which he gave for her coronation that she was to reign after him ; but this ceremony, which was never before used in his states, was undoubtedly calculated to prepare the minds of his people for such an event ; and what made the foreign ministers, and all the sensible part of the Russian nation still more conclude that Catherine was to possess the throne after her husband, was, that he himself walked a-foot before her on the day of her coronation as captain of a new company which he had created, under the name of the Empress's Knights. When they arrived at the cathedral, Peter himself put the crown upon her head, when she would have embraced his knees, but he hindered her, and on going out of the church, he ordered the sceptre and the globe to be carried before her. This ceremony was magnificent, and very

very different from that simplicity which Peter had always observed in his private life.

When he had crowned his wife, he resolved to marry his daughter to the duke of Holstein; but this ceremony was not performed with any particular magnificence.

Peter now found that his strength was much decreased, and he was observed to be more passionate and severe than he had been for many years before. One day the empress came to him to intercede for one of her women who had received presents for using her interest to procure favours for others, though the laws of Russia had made it a capital crime, and who had been convicted of this corruption; but Peter, extremely irritated, refused her request, and in the violence of his passion, broke a fine Venice glass which was in the room, and asked her, If she did not see that with a small blow of the hand he could reduce that glass to the dust from which it was taken? Catherine regarding him with tears in her eyes, answered him nearly in the following words: "Certainly you have broken what was an ornament to your palace, but do you imagine that you will be able to procure another that is more valuable?"

Peter was a little calmed by this answer, but Catherine could not obtain a pardon for her woman; all she could obtain was a mitigation of her punishment.

Towards the beginning of the year 1725 the emperor found his strength daily decreasing, he therefore hastened the execution of many of the projects which he had begun; the active genius of this great man was constantly moving, though his
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bodily

bodily strength could give it very little assistance. Peter had been attacked for some time before with the stone, and had at times a retention of urine, which gave him great pain; and all the remedies which he took procured him but little ease: the violent agitation of his mind, which never ceased, increased his disorder, weakened his body, and hastened his end.

In the beginning of January 1725 he was attacked with a remitting fever, which kept him almost constantly in a delirium; he attempted to write during the intervals of his disorder, but he could not form any letters that could be read: he then ordered that the princess Anna Petrowna should be brought to him, to whom he would dictate what he had to say; but before she could be brought to his bed he had already lost his speech, and fell into an agony which lasted near sixteen hours. The empress Catherine did not quit his chamber for three nights, and at length he died in her arms on the 28th of January 1725.

It was supposed, and even published, that he had left his wife the crown by his testament; but the fact is, that he made no will; and it was not known even to the hour of his death who should mount the throne. His grandson Peter, and his eldest daughter the duchess of Holstein, had some pretensions, and there was a considerable party formed in favour of the former; but prince Mentzikoff, whose talents were superior to all the others, and who had always been connected with the empress Catherine, prevented all the designs that were formed by the chiefs of the different parties. When the emperor was ready to expire, Mentzikoff sent Catherine into a great hall in the palace, where all their friends were assembled, who immediately gained over all the guards, and the archbishop of Novogorod, who led

the clergy : afterwards they sent all the public treasure to the castle ; and Catherine held a secret council with them, and with one of the principal secretaries of state, where the minister of the duke of Holstein assisted. Catherine left the council as soon as possible, and returned to receive her dying husband in her arms some minutes before he breathed his last. Soon after, all the senators and general officers ran to the palace, with Mentzikoff, as commander in chief of the army, at their head, where Catherine made a speech ; to which Mentzikoff answered in their name : they then retired a little to deliberate upon the form of the proclamation ; when the archbishop of Plescow acquainted them that the emperor had declared, the day before the coronation of Catherine, that he crowned her with the intention that she should reign after him ; whereupon all the assembly signed the proclamation, and Catherine succeeded her husband the very day that he died.

Not only the Russians, but even the greatest part of Europe, have given this emperor the title of Peter the Great ; and future generations, to whom his secret faults will be less known, will look with admiration upon the character of this prince. Born with a great genius, he shook off the prejudices of a throne, and of his country ; surmounted the vices of his education ; and finding himself at the head of a nation at that time in a state of the greatest barbarity, he was shocked at the idea of it, and resolved to form a civilized empire. He was himself the creator and the executor of many of his projects ; and as the industrious bee collects her honey from all the summer flowers, so did this great man collect the arts, sciences, and useful regulations of almost every part of Europe. In the midst of a long and dreadful war he formed a formidable marine, opened the

the door to extend the trade of his dominions, built cities, and constructed several new fortresses; he reformed the religion, laws, manners, and customs of this country; and, in fact, formed a new empire, and a new people. He forced nature in every thing, upon the land and upon the water, in his subjects, and in himself; but he forced her in order to embellish her. No part of the government was forgotten by this active, laborious, and enterprizing prince. The world in general have supposed that he was actuated by the love of glory; it is true, but he loved it because he wished thereby do good to the human species. His violent passions often counteracted his good intentions and his reason; but since he had always the good of his people in view, his severities and tyrannical acts, considering likewise the education which he had, were such as may be pardoned. I have already observed, that all the czars of the family of Romanow were naturally disposed to make a reformation in the manners and customs of their country; but they had such a barbarous people to contend with, and met with so many oppositions, that they would never, in all probability, have succeeded, if the strong and active genius of Peter the Great, who made this reformation always the grand object of his pursuit, had not undertaken it.

Peter had strong passions and many vices, which he could never subdue: accustomed from his youth to drink an immoderate quantity of strong liquors, they inflamed his blood, and often pushed him to do such acts of barbarity and inhumanity as he blushed for, some hours after; and he would often declare, that though he was endeavouring to reform others, he could not reform himself. He was much given to sensual pleasures, and had several mistresses; but Catherine, who, like him,

was one of those original geniuses that appear very rarely in the world, captivated him: born with a resolution and strength of judgment that are seldom found in her sex, this extraordinary woman seems to have been calculated by nature to be Peter's companion; and the emperor, who never regarded the great qualities of another with envy, married her, crowned her, and with his sceptre in her hand left her to finish the great enterprizes which he had begun.

The condemnation of his son to death is such a stain in his character as is indelible; whatever were his motives for it, it will afford us a striking example of the depravity of human nature, when we forget the great end for which we were sent into the world, when we forget that humanity is the second great law of God and nature, and when we suffer our passions to overcome our reason.

On the other hand, the arts and manufactures which Peter transplanted from foreign countries, and established with his own hands among a savage people, have, by the fruits which they have produced, given sufficient testimony of his genius, and will be so many monuments of his glory in future ages.

In fact, considering the education which he had received, and the examples of tyranny and brutality which were continually before his eyes, Peter almost effected wonders by forcing nature: but what would he have done if he had been educated in a civilized country, if his heart had been equal to his head, and if, by following the dictates of nature, he had governed his people as rational beings?

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When Peter came to the throne there were at least ten millions of people in the Russian dominions who were in a state of slavery equal to that of the Negroes in the West Indies, and who, though called Christians, were bought and sold with the estates upon which they lived like so many horses or sheep. During the times of barbarity and oppression the proprietors of these lands, and those who called themselves the nobility of the country, had usurped a power over these poor unhappy people, contrary to all laws both divine and human, and which was afterwards confirmed to them by weak and wicked kings, as I have already observed in my account of Denmark.

In the dark ages of barbarism, when mankind lived by preying upon each other like the wild beasts of the desert, such a plan of government might have subsisted, but in these civilized and enlightened ages it must fall; a country can never be enriched by agriculture, manufactures, and commerce where the government suffers subjects to oppress each other in such a manner; and moreover, it is no less contrary to true policy than to the true interest of those who are proprietors of lands: a person who thinks himself oppressed will never use his utmost endeavours to promote the interest of his oppressor: a person who knows that he cannot have any thing but food and common cloathing will not endeavour to procure any thing for his superior, except by force and violence; whereas, if he had a certain fixed share of the fruit of his labours, he would exert himself to augment continually his little. If Peter had begun his reformation by giving freedom to his poor subjects, particularly the farmers, on condition that they established themselves upon farms, paid a fixed yearly rent to the proprietors for their respective farms, and that the property which they gained by their industry should be

be secured to them and to their families, who should be intirely independent of the proprietors of the lands, exclusive of such yearly payments; if Peter had begun his reformation in this manner, he would have laid the corner stone of a structure that future ages would have admired with wonder, and his dominions would at this time have been ten times as rich and flourishing as they actually are.

The death of the emperor Peter the Great produced no change in the affairs of the state, nor in the disposition of the public employments. Mentzikoff, who was always supported by the empress Catherine, by his superior talents and address soon reconciled all parties. When the ceremonies of the burial were passed, the empress gave herself up entirely to the cares of government: she immediately paid off all the arrears which were due to the troops; and as the government was threatened upon the death of Peter with a revolt of the Cossacks, under pretence of preventing the ravages of the Tartars, she engaged them to suffer her to raise some considerable fortresses in their country. The duke of Holstein, her son-in-law, was still at the court of St. Peterbourg. A great part of his territories, particularly the duchy of Sleswic, had always been the source of contention between the dukes of Holstein and the kings of Denmark; but in the year 1720, after the death of Charles the Twelfth, the king of Denmark took possession of this duchy, which was afterwards ceded to him by a treaty, of which England and France were guarantees, so that the family of Holstein Gottorp were deprived of this duchy.

Discontented with this arrangement, the duke refused to give his assent, and waited for an opportunity to sell his rights; and
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with this intention he retired into Sweden, and from thence into Russia, where the emperor Peter the Great, as I have already observed, gave him his eldest daughter in marriage, gave him the title of Royal Highness, and promised to support his pretensions to the duchy of Sleswic. The death of this great prince prevented him from fulfilling his promises in favour of the duke; but the empress Catherine engaged in this affair with some warmth, and prevailed upon the emperor Charles the Sixth, and the kings of Prussia and Sweden, to second her intentions; and from this moment these powers gave the duke of Holstein Gottorp the title of royal highness, and flattered him that he should very soon recover his rights; but the confusion that soon afterwards happened in Russia, and the death of the empress Catherine, prevented this project from being carried into execution.

In the beginning of the year 1726 the empress declared Peter Alexiowitz, son of the unfortunate Alexis, to be her successor, charged herself particularly with his education, and gave him the title of Grand Duke, notwithstanding she had several children; a certain proof of her disinterestedness, and that her husband had justly acquitted her of having in any measure contributed towards the condemnation of Alexis.

Such however was the wicked disposition of several of the Russian nobility; no sooner had Catherine made this declaration, but they began to form a conspiracy against her, and had actually planned a design to shut her up in a convent, and to place Peter Alexiowitz upon the throne: however, by the care and sagacity of Mentzikoff, the plot was discovered and the
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authors punished, their property being confiscated and themselves banished into Siberia.

In the beginning of the year 1727 the empress Catherine fell gradually into a state of langour, without any manifest cause, which made the ignorant part of the nation suppose that she had been poisoned; but soon after this malady turned to a consumption, and it was observed that her lungs were ulcerated, of which she died within two months, in the thirty-ninth year of her age, after a short reign of two years and three months.

As soon as the grand duke was proclaimed emperor, by the title of Peter the Second, the different orders of the state were convoked, and in their presence the testament of the late empress Catherine was read, ratified, and confirmed by the new emperor and by the council of regency, which was formed to take care of the government of the empire; and as this piece, by the fundamental laws of the empire, was to decide in some measure the future form of government, it is too interesting not to be exhibited at large.

After the preamble, the empress proceeded to dispose of the affairs of the state in the following manner: “ First, The great
“ Duke, grandson of the late emperor my husband, shall succeed
“ me, and shall govern with the same sovereign authority and
“ absolute power that I have governed the Russian empire,
“ and his legitimate children shall succeed him: but if he shall
“ die without any issue, my eldest daughter Anna Petrowna shall
“ inherit the crown of Russia; and, after her, her children shall
“ succeed

“ succeed to the crown : if she dies without leaving any issue,
 “ the throne of Russia shall appertain to my daughter Elizabeth
 “ Petrowna, and to her legal heirs after her : but if it shall
 “ please heaven to take my daughter Elizabeth likewise from
 “ this world without leaving any descendents, then the throne
 “ shall be the property of the princess Natalia Alexiowna, grand-
 “ daughter of the late emperor my husband, and to her
 “ descendents: but it is to be understood that the persons named
 “ in my testament, and their descendents, who shall be designed
 “ to wear the imperial crown of Russia, must give up their
 “ pretensions to it if they wear the crown of any other nation;
 “ and moreover, they must publicly profess the Greek reli-
 “ gion.—Secondly, So long as the great duke is not of a
 “ proper age to govern by himself, he shall have a council of
 “ regency, who shall govern during his minority, and who shall
 “ have the care of his education. The majority of the voices
 “ shall be an irrevocable law in this council, which shall consist
 “ of nine persons; namely, my eldest daughter Anna Petrowna,
 “ her sister Elizabeth Petrowna, the duke of Holstein, the prince
 “ Mentzikoff, and five other senators. This council of regency
 “ shall not have power to make any alteration in the order
 “ of succession that I have thought proper to establish by my
 “ present testament, which shall be regarded as a fundamental
 “ and irrevocable law of the empire.—Thirdly, The great
 “ duke shall assist at all the deliberations of this council, whose
 “ decisive power shall continue till he shall have attained to the
 “ seventeenth year of his age, and then it shall cease, and he
 “ shall take the reins of government into his own hands; but
 “ he shall not demand of this council any account of their ad-
 “ ministration.—Fourthly, The princesses my daughters having
 “ ceded, as they actually do cede, their right to the succession

“ of their father and of their mother, in favour of the great
 “ duke and of his descendents, shall receive in consideration
 “ thereof one million of roubles (i. e. 200,000l.) besides their
 “ fortune, which shall be 300,000 roubles for each ; these sums
 “ shall be paid to them during the minority of the emperor
 “ my successor ; and moreover the said princesses my daughters
 “ shall receive each of them a pension of 100,000 roubles a year,
 “ which shall continue during the minority of the emperor ;
 “ and they shall inherit all my jewels, silver vessels, and equi-
 “ page.—Fifthly, The government of Russia shall interest
 “ themselves warmly in the affair of the restitution of the duchy
 “ of Sleswic to the duke of Holstein, and use their utmost en-
 “ deavours to put his royal highness in possession of his heredi-
 “ tary estates : and when the future emperor, my successor, shall
 “ become of age, he shall press this affair with all his force, if
 “ it is not done in his minority : he shall live always in friend-
 “ ship and concord with the House of Holstein ; and when the
 “ said duke shall have mounted the throne of Sweden, to which
 “ he is the next heir, he shall live in friendship and harmony
 “ with Russia.—Sixthly, I do consent that my daughter Eli-
 “ zabeth shall choose for her husband Charles Frederic bishop
 “ of Lubeck, duke of Holstein and Sleswic ; and with this inten-
 “ tion I give them my maternal blessing.—Seventhly, I order
 “ that in future the ambassador of Holstein residing at this court
 “ shall have a proper house in this city ; and it is my will that
 “ this house shall be exempted from the lodging of soldiers, and
 “ from every other charge.—Eighthly, I will and I order that
 “ the great duke be engaged to marry one of the daughters of
 “ the prince Mentzikoff.—Ninthly, When the duke of Hol-
 “ stein shall think proper to retire from this court, he shall be
 “ furnished gratis with such carriages and ships as are necessary

“ for carrying him to his own dominions, which shall be paid
 “ by the emperor my successor.—Tenthly, All my landed pro-
 “ perty, which does not appertain to the crown, but to me in
 “ particular, whether by the donation of the late emperor my
 “ husband, whether by purchase or otherwise, shall be divided
 “ among my nearest relations.—Eleventhly, The emperor of the
 “ Romans shall be desired to guaranty the execution of my pre-
 “ sent testament, and cursed be those who shall endeavour to
 “ hinder the execution of it directly or indirectly.”

Many examples are to be met with in the history of different states, of subjects who have married their respective sovereigns; but I believe this is the first instance of a person who was unknown, taken in the midst of a town that was carried by storm, and led away as a captive and as a slave, becoming the wife of her sovereign, and maintaining gloriously his throne after him: certainly such another example is not to be found in the annals of the world, especially as she owed her rise entirely to her merit, which was to be judged of by one of the greatest men of the age. Her beauty captivated Peter, her great soul drew upon it his admiration, and her prudence rendered her absolutely necessary to him. She was a tender and indefatigable wife, partook of all the labours and fatigues of her benefactor, and her constant gaiety and good humour soothed and calmed his pains and vexations; her humanity often moderated the emperor's severity, and prevented him from doing, in his fits of passion, what he would afterwards have been ashamed of; her complaisance and natural good sense made her conversation interesting and agreeable to her husband. Catherine, who could neither write nor read, made up the want of her education by a greatness of soul, a solid judgment, and a courage and resolution very un-
 D d 2 common

common in one of her sex; she owed all her glory and grandeur to her good conduct, and to the intelligence and attention with which she studied the genius of the czar her husband; and what is very uncommon, she was equally good and benevolent when she sat upon the throne, as she always had been in her private character.

The emperor Peter the Second was only twelve years of age when he mounted the throne of this great empire; and as a minority in every monarchy is generally a time of confusion and of intrigues, it now became so in Russia to the last degree. Mentzikoff, whom the emperor Peter the Great had appointed generalissimo of his forces both by land and sea, as a reward for the great services which he had done the state, and whose superior merit and talents, not only as a general but as a statesman, made him an ornament to the Russian nation, was envied by the Russian nobility, whose ignorance and want of every social virtue could not be equalled but by their wickedness and brutality. The pearls of this great man were really cast before northern swine, who caballed against him, and endeavoured to destroy him for the signal services which he was doing them. Among this spurious race the princes of Dolgorowki, having gained the confidence of the young emperor, persuaded him to revenge the death of his father, of whom, as they said, Mentzikoff had always been the declared enemy; though it does not appear from any of the public records, or from the declarations of the emperor, that this great general had any part in that transaction: they likewise made the emperor believe that he was kept in a state of slavery; and at length they made the poor boy confess, that it would give him pleasure to see Mentzikoff, whose daughter

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ter he had promised to marry, stripped of every thing of which he was possessed.

In this, as in most other despotic governments, there is but the interval of an instant between the grandeur and the fall of a minister: the young emperor was at his country house called Peter's-Hoff, when Mentzikoff, who was ill of a fever at St. Petersburg, was arrested, stripped of all his employments, of his orders, and of all his property, and sent into Siberia with his family. A striking and melancholy example of the vicissitudes of human life!

Mentzikoff, as I have already observed, was of mean extraction, and sold fruit and tarts in the streets of Moscow; by his superior merit and shining talents he recommended himself to the favour of Peter the Great, and was his attendant in all his military expeditions; and by his counsels, by his daring, though well conducted acts of bravery, did the czar more real service, particularly at the famous battle of Pultawa, than half the general officers of his army; as a recompence for which the emperor raised him to the highest degree of honour and grandeur: but as he was found to be no less a statesman than a general, when the peace was concluded with Sweden, he was likewise placed at the head of the civil government, which he conducted in such a manner as gained him the esteem of Peter the Great, and the admiration of all Europe; the greatest potentates endeavoured to cultivate his friendship, and in fact there was the strongest appearance that his posterity would sit upon the throne of Russia. But mark the instability of human greatness, and the wretchedness of a despotic government! When Mentzikoff thought himself in the zenith of his grandeur and power, and was using his
utmost

utmost endeavours to carry the plans of his late great patron into execution for the honour and interest of his country, a race of wretches, who though ennobled by birth had the most abject and groveling ideas, destroyed all his expectations, plunged him into the greatest misery, and would have destroyed all that the emperor Peter the Great had done for the good of his country, if they had not been providentially checked in their career.

Mentzikoff, in his miserable exile, supported his misfortunes with a greatness of soul worthy of a philosopher and of himself: removed from the hurry and confusion of the world, he had an opportunity to reflect upon the vanities of greatness and power, and died a Christian.

Mentzikoff was a great general, a bold but profound politician, and one of those extraordinary persons who acquire great knowledge more by the efforts of their own genius than by application. His wife died before they arrived at the place of their exile; his son and his daughter returned to St. Peterbourg, under the following reign, and had the satisfaction, if it be a satisfaction to great minds, to see the wretched Dolgorowkis, the chief authors of their father's misery, receive the punishment due to their crimes.

In the beginning of the year 1728 the ceremony of the coronation of Peter the Second was performed at Moscow with great magnificence: he had resolved to abandon St. Peterbourg, to take up his residence in the ancient capital; and by the Dolgorowkian counsels, to undo every thing that his grandfather had done for the good of his country. He brought his grandmother Eudocia Lapukin out of the convent where she had been
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confined, and declared her innocent of all the crimes which had been laid to her charge; and every thing was preparing to be reduced to the same situation that it was in when Peter the Great came to the throne.

They renewed this year the treaty of alliance between the empire of Russia and the kingdom of Poland; but the court in the midst of this state of tranquillity were much alarmed by the death of Anna Petrowna, princess imperial, and duchess of Holstein: she left the duke one son, who was born the twentieth of February this year, and called Peter Ulric, and who afterwards mounted the throne under the name of Peter the Third.

Towards the end of the following year, when many of the most useful regulations of Peter the Great were abolished, the emperor Peter the Second, who had been contracted to the daughter of Mentzikoff, was again contracted with the daughter of Dolgorowki, whose father was become his confident and first minister: but when all the empire were preparing to celebrate this marriage, Peter Alexiowitz was attacked with the small-pox, and died soon after, to the great grief of all who wished to have seen Russia reduced to the same state of barbarity that she was in when Peter the First came to the throne.

If they had followed the dispositions of the testament of the empress Catherine, which by the fundamental laws of the empire could not be changed, especially as the late emperor was a minor when he died, the son of the duke of Holstein and of Anna Petrowna was heir to the throne: but this regulation was contrary to the interest of the Dolgorowkis, and the new
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count D'Osterman, who had been raised from the dust by Peter the Great, and who in a moment was ready to destroy even the family and memory of his benefactor; this regulation was contrary to the interest of these men, who formed a great party among the old Russian nobility, and having gained over the guards, resolved to prevent all the descendents of Peter the First from ever ascending the throne, notwithstanding the pains which this great man had taken to make them a nation, and to call the issue of his brother Iwan to the imperial dignity. But by an extraordinary refinement of politics, instead of calling the duchess Catherine of Mecklenbourg to the throne, which might have drawn Russia into an expensive war to support the rights of the duke her husband, they preferred Ann duchess dowager of Courland, her youngest sister, and artfully insinuated that Peter the Second had upon his death-bed designed her to be his successor, though he was still a minor, and consequently not in a situation to make a testament. The Dolgorowki cabal did not long enjoy the authority of which they were so jealous; it is true, the new empress Ann signed all the conditions that were proposed to her before she was proclaimed; but when she saw herself upon the throne, she broke all these dishonourable chains as she deemed them, which restrained her power, sent the family of Dolgorowki into exile for having endeavoured to impose such terms upon her, and made the count D'Osterman her first minister, who had at least cunning enough to change his principles with the times.

No alteration for the better was made in the internal policy of this empire during the reign of Ann Iwanowna; on the contrary, many of the useful regulations which Peter the Great had made were abolished; and certainly if the court had retired from
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St. Peterfbourg to Mofcow, and had not fuch an intercourfe with ftrangers as they constantly had at this time, they would have again fallen into the fame ftate of barbarity and fuperftition that they were in when Peter the Great took the reins of government into his hands.

The ukafes, or laws which were made during this reign, and all their judicial proceedings, tend to prove this great truth.

After the death of Auguftus the Second, king of Poland, in the year 1733, the court of Ruffia declared in favour of Auguftus the Third, againft king Staniflaus, who was protected by his fon-in-law the king of France, and not only obliged Staniflaus to quit the Polish dominions, but fent an army of auxiliary troops to affift the emperor Charles the Sixth, then at war with France.

The three following years the Tartars of Daghiflan, joined by the Tartars of the Crim, declared war againft the Ruffians, and took the towns of Derbent and Baku; but when the empress fent an army under the command of count Munich into thofe parts, thefe robbers retired, and abandoned their conquests: this expedition was very advantageous to the general, but very ruinous to the ftate, which expended great fums of money on it, and loft near 50,000 of their veteran troops.

In the year 1737, upon the death of the duke of Courland, the empress Ann fpared no pains nor expence to make her favourite John Erneft Biron to be elected duke. The ftates of this duchy, awed by the great power of the empress, elected Biron,

who soon after received the investiture of his duchy from the crown of Poland.

In the beginning of the year 1739 the empress married her niece Catherine, daughter of the princess Catherine Iwanowna duchess of Mecklenbourg, to the duke of Brunswic Wolfenbuttel; and during the course of this year marshal Munich, who was still at the head of the Russian army, gained several victories over the combined armies of the Turks and Tartars: he entered into Moldavia, and obtained a great victory over the Turks near Choczim, took this town, and afterwards Jassy, the capital of this province; his design was to join the emperor's army in Hungary, but he never could effect this junction: the Turks on the other hand made some powerful efforts to retake Asoph, which Munich had taken, but without any effect; and the war was soon after finished by the treaty of peace made at Belgrade, between the emperor of Germany and the Sultan, to which the empress of Russia consented; but she was obliged to give up Asoph and its territories.

In the beginning of the year 1740 the empress Ann Iwanowna died, who had been elevated to the throne to overturn all the systems of government which Peter the Great had established: knowing that the throne did not belong to her, she subscribed to very dishonourable conditions to mount it; but as soon as she was fixed on it, and saw through the plan which was to be pursued by the Dolgorowkis and their adherents, she summoned all her resolution, sent the Dolgorowkis into Siberia for having judged so meanly of her, and pursued a plan of government of her own formation. In the dispositions which she made before she died, she took no notice of the order of succession so legally and so formally

mally established by the empress Catherine ; but, instead of calling the young duke of Holstein, or the princess Elizabeth Petrowna, to the throne according to their right, she designed the young prince Iwan, son of the princess of Brunswic her niece, to succeed her, though he was only two months old : she passed over her niece and her niece's husband, to leave the government to her favourite Biron, duke of Courland, whom she appointed guardian to the young emperor, and regent to the empire, with an unlimited power ; though it was by the princess of Brunswic his mother, that the young prince Iwan could aspire to the throne, according to their plan of calling the elder branch of the family of Romanow to the imperial succession ; and this prince, who might succeed to his mother, could never in the natural order of successions go before her : but this was a plan hastily contrived by the empress Ann to raise her favourite Biron to the highest degree of power, though not well enough digested to withstand all the assaults of his enemies in such a turbulent court as that of Russia.

As Biron was now invested with all the power and authority of the state, and with the greatest despotism kept the father and the mother of the young emperor at a great distance, surely he must have thought himself only surrounded by a set of slaves who would take the first opportunity of breaking their chains. It is true, Biron, without abandoning any thing of the prerogatives of his place, took every means to make them supportable by his generosity and affability. In any other court, or with any other persons, such conduct might have been productive of some good effect : but what consideration could he offer to the duchess of Brunswic as a compensation for holding the reins of despotic government ? In fact, this princess, impatient to

reign under the name of her son, assembled all the enemies of the minister, which in a court like that of Russia are generally not only numerous but violent, and informed them, that she would partake the authority of the regent with them, if they would assist her in seizing upon it. As there are always great numbers of people about the court of Russia who are ready to carry any desperate enterprize into execution, no sooner were her intentions known, than it was resolved to arrest the duke; and having secured the guards in their interest, who were at this time become, and have ever since continued, as turbulent and fond of revolts, as were the antient Strelitz, general Munich charged himself with this commission, and arrested the duke; who it is said was found guilty of such enormous crimes, that his judges condemned him to death; but the princess of Brunswic having become regent of the kingdom by his fall, softened the rigour of his punishment, and sent him into Siberia with all his family.

In the beginning of the year 1741, when the queen of Hungary and Bohemia was attacked by such powerful enemies, after the death of her father the emperor Charles the Sixth, and the court of Russia was supposed to have been engaged to take an active part in this war, the court of France induced Sweden to enter into the confederacy, and to avert the force of the Russian arms from the side of Germany, by attacking it in Finland, which was made the theatre of war: but the Russian field-marshal Lassy beat the Swedes near Williamstrand, took the town, and afterwards pursued the Swedish army, which retired, and always preserved the superiority which he had gained.

The duchess of Brunswic not having it in her power to reward those who were concerned in the late revolution as they expected, and not having been, as they supposed, sufficiently generous towards the guards, both the civil and the military slaves of the court began to murmur against her; and the latter, supposing that a subsequent revolution would be more advantageous to them than that which had preceded, indirectly offered their service to the princess Elizabeth Petrowna, who till now had been very quiet, notwithstanding all the injustice which had been done her. Some days were sufficient to form a party in favour of this princess. The last will of Peter the Great and of Catherine not being executed, was regarded as the only cause of all the troubles and confusion which had disturbed the empire for fifteen years past: the ministers, the generals, and the greatest part of the clergy, now acknowledged this momentous truth: and having by large promises secured the guards, the duchess regent, the emperor her son, and the duke her husband, with the principal of their friends and confederates, were arrested in one night; the three former were sent prisoners into a strong fortress, and the latter were exiled to Siberia: this great revolution was effected in one night without any bloodshed, and the next morning Elizabeth was proclaimed empress, and obeyed as if she had been twenty years upon her throne.

The empress Elizabeth, who had much of the benevolent character of her mother, particularly desired that if her subjects would elevate her to the throne, the revolution might be effected without any bloodshed; she was obeyed; and after having reformed the enormous abuses which had been introduced into every part of the government, and re-established the plan which her father Peter the Great had adopted, she parted from Moscow

to be crowned in the ancient cathedral church according to the ceremonial which had been observed at the coronation of the empress Catherine her mother. The successive revolutions which had happened in the government, and the turbulent disposition of the guards and of a great part of the nation, sufficiently instructed the reigning empress in the instability and barbarousness of their sentiments; and knowing that she could not legally have come to the throne before the young duke of Holstein her elder sister's son, to preclude any apparent pretence of murmuring from the ill-disposed part of the nation, she brought the duke her nephew to St. Petersburg, named him lieutenant-general of the troops of the empire, ordered him to be instructed in the Greek religion, and declared him her successor to the throne.

This young prince was likewise heir to the crown of Sweden, and as the king was very old, the diet and senate of this kingdom proposed, in the year 1742, to elect him a successor, when all the voices united in favour of the young duke of Holstein, as the legal heir of the house of Gustavus Vasa. The Swedish ambassadors arrived at the court of Russia the day after the young duke, as having been declared successor to the throne, had taken the title of great duke, and had changed his baptismal names for those of Peter Fœdorowitz. The ambassadors were received with all the regard which was due for the honour which the Swedish nation had done to his imperial highness, who informed them that he could not now accept their crown, but proposed in his place Adolphus Frederic his uncle, then bishop of Lubeck.

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Notwithstanding this extraordinary act of the Swedish nation, they were still at war with the Russians, who had conquered the greatest part of Finland.

However the following year a peace was concluded between the two powers, and signed at Abo; the principal articles of which are as follows: “ That the duke of Holstein Eutin, “ bishop of Lubeck, and administrator of the duchy of Hol- “ stein Gottorp, shall be elected and declared successor to the “ crown of Sweden; that Sweden shall cede to Russia in per- “ petuity all the province of Keymengard, with the river Key- “ men, the town and fortress of Nyssot, and a small tract of land “ to the east, and to the north thereof about four leagues large. “ That Russia shall restore to Sweden for ever and irrevocably “ all the conquests which she had made in Finland, in the “ eastern Bothnia, in Riomeberg, about Abo, the islands of “ Aland, Tavasthus, and Nyland, and all that part of Carelia “ which fell to her share by the treaty of Neustadt concluded. “ in the year 1721.”

The famous Thamas Kouli Kan, at the head of a great army, threatened the frontiers of Russia several times in the course of this year; on which the empress Elizabeth assembled all the troops which she had on the side of Astracan, and sent a great number of officers into Circassia to engage the Tartars of this country to put themselves under her protection, and to furnish her with a certain number of soldiers; so that every thing was now disposed for a bloody war; but Kouli Kan soon perceived that his troops, though active and brave, were not in a situation to oppose the European discipline, and therefore made propositions of peace, which were accepted.

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In the beginning of the year 1745 the courts of St. Peterbourg and of Stockholm entered into a treaty of defensive alliance, wherein they engaged, in the cases therein specified, to succour each other mutually; Sweden engaged to furnish Russia with 8000 foot foldiers and 2000 horse, together with six ships of the line and two frigates; and Russia engaged to furnish Sweden with 12,000 foot, 4000 horse, nine ships of the line, and three frigates.

This treaty gave great uneasiness to the king of Denmark, especially as the duke of Holstein, nominated successor to the crown of Sweden, was so nearly allied by blood to the successor of the crown of Russia.

The empress Elizabeth having formed the design of marrying immediately the young duke, made choice of Sophia Augusta of Anhalt Zerbst; who, after she had embraced the Greek religion, took the name of Catherine Alexiowna, married the great duke, and was declared great duchess of Russia; and moreover, supposing the great duke and the empress to die without heirs, she was declared their successor to the crown. Catherine had rendered herself so much beloved by her affability and good conduct at her first coming into Russia, that the whole nation appeared to be well satisfied with this regulation. The great duke, who was now become of age, was declared reigning duke of Holstein Gottorp; and during the first years of his marriage he occupied himself particularly with his affairs in Holstein, and a coolness was soon perceived between him and the grand duchess. The empress having been informed that he had left several debts in Holstein, ordered 2000 roubles to be advanced immediately for their payment, which act of generosity was extremely

tremely well received by all the sensible part of the Russian nation.

In the year 1754 the great duchess became pregnant, after having been nine years married, and was happily delivered of a prince, who was baptized by the name of Paul Petrowitz, and declared hereditary prince of the imperial crown.

About this time likewise the empress Elizabeth, by the artful intrigues of the ministers of the courts of Vienna and Dresden, was induced to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with these courts against the king of Prussia, who on his having discovered the plan which was concerted against him, in the year 1756 entered Saxony at the head of a powerful army. This measure having greatly disconcerted the arrangement of the three courts, irritated the empress Elizabeth to the last degree; and orders were immediately issued to precipitate the march of the Russian army, which was to make a powerful diversion in Prussia.

In the beginning of the following year, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, who was charged with this commission by his Britannic Majesty, made some strong representations to the court of Russia to engage the empress to mediate between the courts of Vienna, Berlin, and Dresden; but he was answered, that such a mediation would be incompatible with the resolutions and measures already taken by her imperial majesty; and moreover, that her majesty would not recall her army before the two powers, who were supposed to have been wronged, as the king of Prussia had now marched into Bohemia, should have received a satisfaction proportioned to the nature of the offence.

This minister was not more successful in the demand which he made for permission to buy up a certain quantity of grain in Livonia for the use of the electorate of Hanover, where there was then such a scarcity, that it was feared a famine would ensue, unless some sudden supply was sent.

The Russian army, commanded by the field-marshal Apraxin, advanced towards Prussia, and had no sooner entered into the territories of the king, than they were rudely attacked by a Prussian army under the command of field-marshal Lehwald; but the Russians, from the strict discipline which is now observed in their army, defended themselves with uncommon resolution; and though the Prussians renewed their attacks with great intrepidity, they were obliged to give way, after leaving 3000 men dead upon the field, and nine-and-twenty pieces of cannon in the hands of the enemies.

The field-marshal Apraxin, to the astonishment of all mankind, instead of pursuing the enemy and marching into the heart of Prussia, returned towards Courland and Poland, and ordered his troops into winter-quarters; declaring, that as he had no magazines formed for their support, he dared not take up his winter-quarters in the enemy's country. The empress, highly offended at this conduct of her general, ordered him immediately to leave the command of the army to general Fermer, and to return to Peterbourg to answer to the accusations which were laid against him; at the same time declaring to all the foreign ministers residing at her court, that she had sent particular orders to her army to quit the surrounds of Memel and Courland, where they were then quartered, and penetrate a second time into the heart of Prussia.

Early in the following season the Russian army, now under the command of general Fermer, took Koningberg, the capital of the little kingdom of Prussia, and laid its whole territories under contribution; afterwards, pursuing their operations, they took the town of Custrin; and on the 25th and 26th of August gained a complete victory over the Prussian army.

The field-marshal Apraxin, who had been kept prisoner at Narva, was removed to Peterbourg to answer for his conduct in the last campaign; but though his bad behaviour was manifest to all the world, for reasons which were not then known, but which afterwards appeared, his judges acquitted him of any capital crime; and he would very soon have been restored to favour, had not a stroke of the palsy carried him off suddenly.

The chancellor Bestucheff, though he was one of the empress's great favourites, was at this time arrested, divested of all his employments, and condemned to be exiled to one of his country houses, there to be kept under strong guard all the rest of his life. The chancellor underwent a formal trial, and various accusations were laid against him; but the secret cause of his disgrace was his being gained over by the great duke to retard the operations of the Russian army against the Prussians, which were disagreeable to the duke.

In the year 1759 the general Fermer, pretending that his health was greatly weakened by the fatigues of the former campaign, but the true meaning was, because his activity had made him disagreeable to the great duke, desired leave to retire; and the empress entrusted the command of her army to general Soltikoff, who departed

immediately from Peterfbourg to begin his operations against the Pruffians in concert with the generals of the empress-queen of Hungary. The first operations were near Croffen, where a body of Pruffians attacked the Russian army, and made some powerful efforts to throw them into disorder, but without any effect. The Pruffians lost 2000 men, who were killed upon the spot, 4000 prisoners, and more than 3000 deserters, and were obliged to retire and leave twenty-one pieces of cannon in the hands of the enemy, who marched immediately to Croffen, and from thence to Francfort on the Oder, which they took, and sent their detachments even to the gates of Berlin. The king of Prussia, far from being disconcerted at this check, made some forced marches, with 20,000 men, to reinforce his army, and to prevent the Austrian generals Laudon and Haddick from joining the Russians with a large body of their troops; but he arrived too late to prevent this manœuvre. The king, to retrieve the honour of his general, attacked the Russians on the twentieth of August with the greatest vigour; and the Russians, to maintain the honours which they had gained, defended themselves with equal bravery; the battle was a bloody one, and during several hours the Pruffians had greatly the advantage, notwithstanding the prodigious defence which the Russian infantry made against the Prussian attacks; but at length the Pruffians were overpowered by numbers and obliged to retire, leaving 8000 men dead upon the field of battle, and 7000 wounded and deserters fell into the enemy's hand, together with 150 pieces of cannon, and a great part of their baggage. But this terrible battle cost the Russians near 20,000 men killed and wounded.

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This news was received at St. Peterbourg with great joy: the empress distributed large presents to all her generals, and half a year's pay to the victorious army; moreover, every foldier, who could prove his presence in this battle, was declared, by an ukase or law, to be free and independent during the rest of his life.

In the beginning of the following year the kings of Great Britain and Prussia made some proposals to the empress Elizabeth to hold a congress to settle the differences of the belligerent powers; but the empress, who, in consideration of a great subsidy which she received from the court of Vienna, still continued in the disposition to procure her allies a satisfaction proportionate to their losses, declared that she was sensible how much innocent blood had been shed in this war, and wished to see a firm and lasting peace established; but she could never think of entering into any negotiations but in concert with her faithful allies. A copy of this answer was likewise sent to all the foreign courts, to be there communicated by the Russian ministers; and at the same time orders were given out to enroll, with the greatest expedition, every 128th man in those provinces which were obliged to furnish recruits, which composed a body of 45,000 men, without comprehending the provinces of Livonia, Estonia, Finland, the Ukraine, and the kingdom of Siberia; so great are the resources of this extensive empire.

General Soltikoff, who was given to understand how disagreeable his operations were to the great duke, made no use of his victory, but remained inactive all the rest of the campaign and the beginning of that of the following year.

In the middle of the summer 1760 the Russian fleet, composed of ten ships of the line, five frigates, and three bombships, carrying 3000 land forces, attacked the town of Colberg. The debarkation was made without any difficulty, and batteries were raised which produced a great effect: the bombs from the ships destroyed a great part of the town; and the 3000 foldiers, though almost all recruits, shewed great resolution and firmness on this occasion, made a great part of the garrison prisoners of war, and carried off several pieces of cannon from their out-works; but when the town was ready to fall into the hands of the Russians, general Werner, whom the king of Prussia had dispatched with 4000 men to succour the besieged, attacked the advanced posts of the besiegers with such fury, that, supposing they had at least 20,000 men to contend with, they retired, and re-embarked themselves with the greatest precipitation, leaving all their artillery and stores in the hands of the enemy.

In the year 1761 the empress Elizabeth, who was no better pleased with the result of the operations of Soltikoff than she had been with those of Apraxin and Fermer, gave the command of her army to the field-marshal Butterlin, who, in all his operations against the Prussians, was ordered to act in concert with the field-marshal Daun and the general Loudon.

The Russian fleet, which had been joined by that of Sweden, came a second time and blocked up the port of Colberg, while the general Romanzow invested the place by land. The siege, which was a bloody one, the Russians having lost great numbers of men, was continued from the month of July to the 17th of December, when the governor capitulated, and obtained honourable terms.

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The news of the taking of this place apparently gave great joy to the court of St. Peterfbourg ; but this joy was very soon changed into mourning by the death of the empress Elizabeth the 25th of the fame month.

Elizabeth inherited many of the good qualities of the empress Catherine her mother : when ſhe mounted the throne ſhe uſed her utmoſt endeavours to carry all the regulations which had been planned by her father Peter the Great into execution, but ſhe adopted no part of Peter's ſeverity : ſhe governed this great empire for twenty years with a moderation and clemency which gained her the love of all her ſubjects and the admiration of all Europe. She faithfully kept the oath which ſhe made when ſhe came to the throne, that no criminal ſhould loſe his life during her reign ; and the victories which were gained by her armies made her ſhed tears when ſhe heard how many innocent perſons had loſt their lives by them. During her laſt illneſs ſhe ordered 13 or 14,000 poor people, who were detained in the different priſons of the kingdom for ſmuggling, to be ſet at liberty, and all their effects which had been confiscated to be reſtored to them, the laws of this country being very ſevere againſt ſmugglers : ſhe likewiſe opened all the priſons where poor debtors were detained for ſums not exceeding 500 roubles, or 100l. ſterling, and ordered their debts to be paid out of her private purſe ; 25,000 priſoners were ſet at liberty in conſequence of this order : ſhe moreover ordained that 1,500,000 roubles ſhould be diminished of the tax ariſing from ſalt, becauſe it was an article of the firſt neceſſity for the common people.

Elizabeth ſoftened the rigour of many of the laws which her father and her anceſtors had enacted. Before her time all the family

family of a criminal were more or less comprehended in the punishment which he was condemned to receive; a law unjust in itself, and contrary to the laws of God and nature; Elizabeth was shocked at the idea of it, and ordered it to be repealed. The code of laws which her father had begun she ordered to be finished; but it is a very imperfect one, though Peter's severity and Elizabeth's clemency have made an heterogeneous mixture which in some respects is not disagreeable. The Russians were not civilized enough to be governed by such an humane and clement princess as was Elizabeth, and made a bad use of her great lenity and goodness. Elizabeth was a great lover of the fine arts, and protected them; she encouraged commerce, and invited strangers to come and settle in her dominions.

This empress was never married, though she was always of a very amorous disposition; and many of the Russian wittings have from thence observed, that her great clemency towards smugglers was, because she was very fond herself of dealing in this species of business.

No sooner had the empress Elizabeth breathed her last, than the field-marshal Trubetskoi came into the anti-chamber, and declared that the Most High had taken the empress Elizabeth Petrowna to himself, and that the emperor Peter the Third had taken the reins of government into his own hands. This great event was immediately made public by a proclamation, in which the new emperor, after having notified to all the Russian nation his having taken the charge of the government according to the legal order of succession, declares, that he is resolved to make the example of the late empress Elizabeth, of glorious memory, the principal rule for his conduct in the government of the
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Russian empire ; to imitate her clemency and humanity ;—but in what regarded the improvement and reformation of the nation, he declared his intention was to follow the steps of his grandfather Peter the Great.

After the nobility and gentry of Russia had done homage to the emperor and to the empress ; after all the troops had taken the oaths of fidelity ; and after all the funeral ceremonies of the late empress were finished, the emperor gave himself up entirely to the cares of government, and to the arrangement of the most proper means to accomplish the great changes which he projected. To signalize the great event of his advancement to the throne, and to secure the love and affection of his subjects, he set all the prisoners of state at liberty, and recalled all who had been exiled into Siberia in the preceding reigns, particularly Biron duke of Courland, the field-marshal Munich, and all their respective families, and restored them to their rank and honours.

The empress Elizabeth, when she was upon her death bed, recommended it to the Great Duke her successor to fulfil faithfully all the engagements which she had entered into with her allies ; but as soon as Peter the Third came to the throne, all the Prussian officers who were prisoners of war were set at liberty, and the emperor gave each of the field officers 1000 ducats to pay the expences of the journey into their own country ; he likewise sent a large sum of money to the inhabitants of Prussian Pomerania, to indemnify them in some measure for what they had suffered from the Russian troops ; and promised them, that as soon as the sea was clear of frost, he would send them grain and other necessaries. The empress Catherine was put in possession of the lands which the late empress Elizabeth possessed,

which were valued at 45,000 roubles a year: but the emperor was particularly generous to all his relations of the house of Holstein. The duke George Lewis his uncle was declared generalissimo of all his armies, governor general of the states of Holstein, colonel of the regiment of horse-guards, and the emperor permitted him to take the title of imperial highness; at the same time ordering that all the princes and princesses of Holstein should, on all occasions, have the pre-eminence over all the nobility of Russia, as being of his family.

The empress likewise, in imitation of her husband, was no less generous and liberal towards the princesses of Holstein. It was very natural for Peter the Third to shew the greatest respect to the princes and princesses of his house, and to put them in a situation to support their rank and dignities; but such immense liberalities bestowed upon strangers are always regarded in monarchies as so many robberies upon the nation.

After he had provided for his family, the emperor turned his attention towards Holstein and the duchy of Sleswick; he sent sixteen regiments of infantry and cavalry into that province, which clearly gave the king of Denmark to understand, that he was determined to possess by force of arms what he never could obtain by long negociations. As soon as Peter the Third came to the throne, he likewise removed the field-marshal Butterlin from the command of the army which was acting against the king of Prussia, and reinstated general Fermer in that command; and some days after a cessation of arms was published between the Russians and Prussians, together with orders to make an exchange of prisoners; and these were soon followed by the following declaration, which the emperor made to his allies:

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“ The first duty of a sovereign,” says he in this extraordinary piece, “ is to extend and increase the happiness and welfare of his subjects; and it is with the greatest regret that we see that the fire of the present war, which has continued six years, and which for some time past has been greatly distressing to the powers which are engaged in it, far from coming to an end, is, on the contrary, extending itself more and more, to the great detriment of all the neighbouring nations, and to the destruction of multitudes of the human species. Moved by the principles of humanity, we do hereby declare to all the allies of the Russian empire, that preferring above all considerations the first law that God has prescribed to sovereigns, which is the preservation of the people who are entrusted to them, we wish to procure peace to our empire, to which it is so necessary and so precious; and at the same time to contribute, as much as it is in our power, to re-establish it in all Europe. It is with this view that we are ready to give up all our conquests, in hopes that the other powers, our allies, on their side will equally prefer peace and tranquillity to the advantages which they may acquire by the war, and which they can never obtain but by shedding a torrent of human blood.”

Peter the Third had drawn up a plan for a general peace, which he supposed would be infallible; and as it was a very extraordinary one in many respects, and would undoubtedly have made great changes in Germany and in many other parts of Europe, I will detail the principal parts of it.

To balance the family compact of the house of Bourbon this prince proposed to establish one of the same kind in the North,

composed of the three principal sovereign branches of the house of Holstein; namely, the kings of Denmark and of Sweden, and the emperor of Russia, to which he would have joined his great favourite the king of Prussia; but the king of Denmark was not to be admitted into this union till he had formally ceded all his pretensions to the duchies of Sleswic and Holstein; and if he refused this, the king of England was to be invited to enter into this compact. With regard to the plan for the general peace, the great duchy of Silesia alone embarrassed Peter the Third: he was of opinion that the king of Prussia should keep it, and that it should be guaranteed upon the same footing that it was by the treaties of 1742 and of 1745, except the county of Glatz, which should return to the empress-queen of Hungary and Bohemia: but as there was a great appearance that this princess would not consent to such an arrangement, it was his opinion that this province should be restored and guaranteed to her, or to her posterity, for ever, in case that the duke of Mecklenbourg should die without children, and that his duchy was united to the house of Brandenburg, according to the family-compact which existed between the two houses; and that his Prussian majesty, to prevent the complaints and pretensions of the other princes of the house of Mecklenbourg, should cede to them a part of his possessions upon the Lower Rhine, which should be to the mutual satisfaction of all the interested parties; and moreover the king of Prussia should cede East Friezland to the king of Denmark. To make good the losses which the king of Poland, as elector of Saxony, had sustained, not only by the court of Berlin, but by that of Vienna, was a point which gave some little embarrassment to Peter; nevertheless he imagined that he could provide for this, at least in part, if not in whole: he proposed that his Prussian majesty should cede to him the
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duchy of Croffen and what he possessed in Lufacia ; and that the Germanic body should revive in his favour the landgraviate of Thuringia, in which should be comprehended the county of Mansfield, to be united for ever to the electorate of Saxony ; that the bishopric of Munster should be secularized in favour of prince Xavier of Saxony ; and that the king of Prussia should cede to him some part of the territories which he possessed upon the Lower Rhine and his pretensions to the succession of Juliers ; that the prince Clement of Saxony should have the first ecclesiastical electorate which should become vacant ; and that the emperor should so concert it with the chapters, that the thing should be absolutely certain. Moreover, Peter had so ordered it, that the prince Henry of Prussia should have the crown of Poland after the death of king of Augustus, which was likewise to descend to his posterity : Peter would not that he should receive it by the right of election, according to the laws of the kingdom, but by the right of conquest ; and he would oblige himself in consequence of this, when the throne should become vacant, to enter Poland at the head of 100,000 men, and he desired the king of Prussia to do the same on his side ; that the two armies should excite the people to support this project under the promise of dissolving their slavery, and by this means to bring them to proclaim prince Henry king of Poland, and to declare the succession to the throne hereditary in his family, and in default of issue, in that of the electors of Brandenburg. He proposed to abolish all the laws of Poland, as those of a monstrous government, without consistence and without consideration, and to substitute new ones in their place, more conformable to the rights of mankind and to the laws of nature ; that the Polish nobility should not any longer have the right of life and death upon their vassals, nor the property of
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their lands and of their crops ; that the great duchy of Lithuania should be subjected to the same laws and to the same administration ; that the sovereignty should reside essentially in the person of the sovereign ; that the diets should be abolished, and that there should be courts of justice established for all ordinary cases according to the plan prescribed in the Prussian code. Prince Henry of Prussia being king of Poland was, by this arrangement, to cede to the king his brother all that part of Prussia appertaining to Poland, which was to be united for ever to the little kingdom of Prussia. A great part of the duchy of Lithuania was to be added to that of Courland, which was to be formed into a state for the duke of Holstein, who in consideration of it was to cede Holstein and Sleswic to Russia. Peter had likewise proposed that the bishopric of Osnabrug should be secularized and united to the electorate of Hanover ; a measure which he thought would please all parties, as this bishopric is possessed alternatively by a Catholic and by a Lutheran bishop ; and therefore he thought that this secularization would be agreeable both to the Catholics and to the Lutherans, as the first should have always a Catholic bishop and the second a Lutheran sovereign, who should establish in favour of the bishop a sufficient revenue to support his rank and dignity. The town of Bremen was likewise to be annexed to this electorate. To make some recompence to the king of Denmark for his ceding of all his pretensions to Sleswic and part of Holstein, Peter proposed to abandon all his pretensions to Oldenbourg and Delmenhorst, and that East Friezland should be annexed to it. The bishopric of Hildesheim was to be secularized in favour of duke Ferdinand of Brunswic, with the title of duchy, as a reward for his great military services.

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This was the plan of the arrangement which was projected by the late emperor Peter the Third: I will make no remarks on it, only just to observe, that there cannot be the least doubt but that it would have been very ill received by many of the belligerent powers. If Peter saw such a monstrous absurdity and inconsistency in the Polish laws, because of the tyranny and oppression of the nobility over their vassals, in which undoubtedly he was right, why did not he begin to make the regulations proposed in his own country, where the poor are equally in a state of slavery, and no less oppressed than they are in Poland?

Peter the Third, persuaded that the most sure and certain means of augmenting the commerce of a state consisted in giving it the greatest freedom possible, took off the duty of two per cent. that had been laid upon all the merchandizes which were imported or exported at Archangel, or into or from Persia, and ordered that larger duties should be paid at St. Peterbourg, Riga, and Narva, where the commerce is better established. He forbid his privy council to take cognizance of any criminal matter, as they had heretofore done, and reserved to himself the decision of all the extraordinary cases in which the laws of the empire had not yet been explained, which were at least the one third of all those that came before the courts of justice.

Peter the Great and Elizabeth had not foreseen all the different kinds of contests which would arise among individuals when the manners and customs of the country came to be more refined, neither had they guarded, in their arrangements of the police, against many acts which are regarded as criminal among
civilized

civilized people, and which perhaps were thought otherwise among the ancient Russians.

Peter established a college or tribunal of police, that was to take cognizance only of such things as tended to the refinement, glory, and utility of the nation: but one law of this police, which was no less singular than capricious, was to forbid any of his subjects to make use of the French language, and to compel them to use only the Russian and German languages in all the memorials which should be presented either to the court, or in the different tribunals of the empire.

Before the reign of Peter the Great the Russian nobility were not permitted to go out of the kingdom on any consideration, except they were sent by the express order of the court; but this great emperor gave his nobility the liberty of travelling after they had obtained the ordinary permission of the sovereign for that purpose: Peter the Third declared, that in future the Russian nobility should be at liberty to travel without even subjecting themselves to the regulations of Peter the Great; and if they thought proper, to enter into the service of any foreign power, provided that such power was not at war with Russia. He likewise published a law to enable the nobility to dispose of their property agreeably to their inclination, and without demanding the consent of any person for this purpose. He had also projected an establishment of a kind of bank for the nobility, where they might borrow considerable sums of money in copper coin without any interest, provided that this money was repaid in gold or silver in the space of fifteen years. The merchants likewise were to be at liberty to borrow from this bank, upon paying an interest of four per cent. He dissolved the inquisition

tion or secret chancery, which was no less abominable and tyrannical than that of Venice. He suppressed the law which made it necessary that criminals should make a confession of their crimes, and published a very rigorous edict for the reformation of luxury.

So far the regulations which Peter the Third was willing to introduce into his dominions were laudable and praise-worthy; and undoubtedly if he had continued in this train, he would have had nothing to fear: but without the abilities, resolution, or power of Peter the Great, he attempted to reform his clergy, and this in a very capricious manner; an attempt which his grandfather found to be very difficult, and which more than once shook him upon the throne.

As Peter regarded himself to be chief of the ecclesiastical as well as of the civil power, he undertook to carry into execution the great plan which his grandfather had formed; namely, that of secularizing all the property of the ecclesiastics, and the revenues of the monasteries: it was found on a calculation that the number of the poor slaves who cultivated the church-lands, and who were tributary, amounted to 899,100, who, reckoning only one rouble a year for each, brought a large sum of money into the hands of the clergy. Peter the First seized upon the greatest part of this property in the year 1704; but he restored most of it again to the church in 1711, and the empress Elizabeth restored the remainder in 1744. Peter the Third reunited all this property to the crown: he forbade all the religious houses to receive any novices, and to suffer them to take the vow before they had respectively obtained the 30th year of their age. He assigned to each of the three first bishops 5000 roubles a

year, and 3000 each to all the other. He divided all the ecclesiastics of his empire into three classes; to those of the first class he gave 500 roubles a year each; to those of the second class 300; and to those of the third class 150 each. He ordered the archbishop of Novogorod to remove out of the churches a great number of the pictures which were fixed in those holy places, and which he regarded as superfluous; and only to leave there the crucifixes, and the images of the Virgin Mary. He ordered that all the ecclesiastics should shave their beards, and wear such cloaths as are worn by the Calvinist and Lutheran clergy. The archbishop of Novogorod made a vigorous opposition to these regulations, and refused to publish them; on which the emperor sent him into exile; but being informed what bad effects this exile might produce, and how much the minds of the people were disturbed, he recalled him soon afterwards.

Not content with all these changes in the ecclesiastical and civil government, Peter the Third broke the regiment of guards which the late empress Elizabeth had created, and formed a new one out of it, cloathed in the Prussian manner, of which all the officers were Germans: he ordered that in future all his troops should be cloathed in blue instead of green, after the Prussian manner: he abolished their ancient exercises, in order to substitute those of the Prussians.

It was very easy to foresee how all these premature and precipitate measures would terminate: the clergy chagrined to the last degree, the military discontented, a great part of the nobility forgotten in the late distribution of places, and the nation violently bent against the peace, which they judged to be contrary to the interest and honour of the empire.

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The particular peace which Peter the Third had concluded with the king of Prussia gave great uneasiness to all his allies, as well as to all his subjects, who published declarations against this measure. The courts of Vienna and Warsaw, as well as that of France, exclaimed violently against the emperor's conduct, and declared their intentions to carry on the war. When the deputies of the nobility of Courland came to Peterbourg to compliment the emperor upon his coming to the throne; this prince, in assuring them of his protection and of the care which he would take to support them in their rights and privileges, informed them, "That it was not compatible with the fundamental laws of Courland to have a Catholic prince for their master." Such a declaration was very disagreeable to prince Charles, the third son of the king of Poland, who had been elected duke of Courland in the place of Biron; and soon after his royal highness received an order from the court of Peterbourg to leave Mittau, and the territories of the duchy immediately: if any thing could add to the chagrin of the king of Poland it was this measure.

These were the principal changes which preceded the dethroning of Peter the Third, and the great revolution which happened in the middle of the year 1762; but what hastened this great event, and animated many of his subjects more particularly against him, was the imprudent declaration which he made to several of his friends of his having formed a resolution to dissolve his marriage with the empress, to declare his son illegitimate, to shut up both the mother and the son in a convent all the rest of their lives, and to marry the countess Elizabeth Woronzoff his mistress.

The empress and all her party took fire at this declaration ; and the chiefs of this party, finding the whole nation ready for a revolt, immediately formed a conspiracy to dethrone the emperor, and to place the empress upon the throne, into which great numbers of persons of all ranks entered ; and having corrupted the guards, the field-marshal Rasomowski, the count Pannin, governor of the great duke Paul Petrowitz, the prince Wolkonski, the three brothers, counts Orlovs, and the field-marshal Butterlin, put themselves at the head of the conspiracy. But in order to be the more sure of having it in their power to save themselves in case they were discovered or betrayed, they had always near them an able spy upon whose conduct they could depend, in order that if any one of them was arrested, the others might be immediately informed of it, that they might have time to save themselves. The consequence will shew how much this precaution was necessary. A lieutenant of the guards was discovered to be of this conspiracy, by some imprudent words which fell from one of the soldiers of his company, and was immediately arrested. The spy who was near him, immediately gave an account of this to the other conspirators, who seeing that their project would be immediately discovered, and that they had not a moment to lose, resolved to be before-hand with the emperor, who was then at Oranienbaum, one of his country houses near the sea, some leagues from Peterbourg. The empress was at this time at Peter's Hoff: the princess of Askhoff, the sister of the countess of Woronzoff, the emperor's mistress (at whose house the assembly of the conspirators was held, and who had treacherously discovered her sister's secrets, and the emperor's resolution concerning her) on the ninth of July in the morning sent a coach to the empress, who disguised herself, and count Gregory Orlov conducted her to Peterbourg to the quarters

quarters of the Ismailoff regiment of guards : when all the soldiers of this regiment, who had been before gained over by their officers, and who were ready to receive her, proclaimed her empress and sole sovereign of all the Russias : all the senators and the chiefs of the colleges, who had long before murmured on account of the emperor's extraordinary behaviour, immediately joined the troops, and the count Rasomowski led the new empress to the church of Casan, where her majesty took an oath to preserve the privileges of the nation, and where all the assembly likewise took the oaths of fidelity and obedience, and assisted at the Te Deum which was sung by the archbishop of Novogorod and all the clergy.

The whole day was afterwards employed in strengthening the party of the new sovereign in the capital where all the troops were assembled that were in the neighbourhood, together with three regiments who had just left this place, to join the army in Germany, and who received orders to return immediately : they had likewise taken the precaution to guard all the roads and passages by which advice might be transmitted to Peter the Third of what was transacting at St. Peterbourg.

About six o'clock in the evening the empress, dressed in the uniform of the body guards, mounted her horse, and reviewed all her troops, who composed a body of 15,000 men.

The next morning however Peter was informed of the danger which threatened him, and departed immediately for Peter's Hoff, accompanied by his Holstein guards, but he was forced to return again to Oranienbaum, where he thought to have received succours ; but perceiving that all the troops were gained over by the other

other party, he determined to pass over in his yacht to Cronstadt, in hopes that his fleet would be more faithful to him than his land forces; but the empress and her party had taken the most early precautions to secure the fleet, and all the marine officers had already taken the oaths of fidelity and obedience to her; as soon as Peter the Third therefore appeared, the sentinel ordered him to retire immediately, or otherwise they should be obliged to fire upon him.

If Peter had now taken the resolution to put himself at the head of his army, which was in Germany under the command of general Fermer, he would have disconcerted all the schemes of the new government of Peterbourg, and in all probability have re-established himself. But the emperor, as well as all those who were about him, was surprized at the suddenness of the measure; though it is said that the old field-marshal Munich advised him to set off instantly and join Fermer's army. In this cruel situation Peter returned to Oranienbaum, and attempted to defend himself to the last extremity, with some companies of Holstein guards who were with him; but foreseeing that it would not be in his power to resist all the forces that were on their march to attack him, he determined at last to enter into a negotiation. The articles which this prince proposed were not received; his Holstein guards laid down their arms, and he was arrested by the general Ismailoff, and conducted from Oranienbaum to Peter's Hoff, where he was guarded in an apartment. It was in this place that the unhappy emperor was persuaded to sign a declaration, whereby he renounced the empire, and desired only to govern in Holstein, supposing by this that the empress would have had compassion upon him. The duke of Holstein his uncle was arrested with all his family, and their houses were pillaged by

by the populace, which was likewise the case with count Woronzoff father of the countess Elizabeth, and of several others.

The same day that this great revolution was brought about, the empress published a formal manifesto ; in which, after having recapitulated all that Peter had done against the clergy and others, she observes that, “ Our true and orthodox religion was
“ upon the point of being entirely overturned by the introduc-
“ tion of a foreign religion, and all the true sons of Russia saw
“ with the greatest concern, a peace made with the enemy
“ which trampled under foot all the glory which the empire had
“ gained with so much blood and treasure. But, independently
“ of the love which he should have cherished for his Creator,
“ which he had absolutely laid aside, the late emperor would like-
“ wise trample under foot all the laws of nature, since at his
“ coming to the throne he would not declare his only son
“ Paul Petrowitz for his successor, in consequence of a design
“ which he had formed either to set aside the right of succe-
“ sion, in virtue of which he had inherited the crown from the
“ late empress his aunt ; or to deliver the empire into the hands
“ of strangers, without considering the great principle of natural
“ right ; namely, that no person can give a greater right to ano-
“ ther, than that which he has himself received. Although we
“ immediately saw through his designs, and were much disquieted
“ by them, we could not have supposed that he would have carried
“ his persecutions so far against us and our son. But great num-
“ bers of our faithful subjects saw from that moment that his
“ design was to destroy us and our son, who is the heir to the
“ empire, and it was surprizing that the public discontent did
“ not break out sooner. After having therefore implored the
“ protection of heaven, we formed the resolution either to fall
“ a victim

“ a victim to the honour and prosperity of this country, or to
“ deliver her from those intestine troubles which were ready to
“ tear her to pieces, and to turn off that torrent of human
“ blood with which she was hourly threatened. It is with great
“ difficulty that we brought ourselves, by calling upon the Al-
“ mighty to give us assistance, to undertake this great task ;
“ but we had scarcely made known to our faithful subjects,
“ who were deputed to us by the nation, our consent to what
“ they demanded of us, than the general desire to be submitted
“ and attached to us manifested itself immediately, and was
“ confirmed by the oath of fidelity which was taken to us,
“ freely, and with the greatest joy, by all the orders of the state.
“ —In consequence of the natural love which we always had for
“ the good of the human species, and particularly for the tender
“ care which we have for our faithful subjects, it was necessary
“ that we should now endeavour to prevent the inconsiderate re-
“ solutions which the heretofore emperor might take, as he
“ placed such confidence in the force and bravery of the Hol-
“ stein troops which he had with him at Oranienbaum ; and
“ that to prevent the torrent of blood which our regiments of
“ guards and other regiments were ready to shed, as the effect
“ of their zeal for their religion and country, for our person,
“ and for our dear son ; therefore we were firmly persuaded that
“ it was a duty which we owed towards God, and towards our
“ subjects, to prevent immediately by good and salutary arrange-
“ ments all the ill consequences which the resolutions of the here-
“ tofore emperor might bring upon us and upon our faithful sub-
“ jects ; and in consequence of them we put ourselves at the head of
“ our troops, with the intention to defeat all the projects of which
“ we were informed he was preparing against us ; but we were
“ scarcely departed from this city, when we received two letters

“ from him consecutively ; in the first, he demands our permis-
 “ sion to retire into Holstein, his own country ; in the second,
 “ which was given into our hands by major general Ismailoff,
 “ he offers to renounce all his right to the crown of Russia,
 “ provided that he is permitted to retire into Holstein with
 “ Elizabeth Woronzoff. These two letters were filled with the
 “ most flattering expressions towards us, although they were
 “ written some hours after the formal order which he had signed
 “ to take away our life ; a fact which was related to us, and
 “ averred in the most circumstantial manner by the very persons
 “ whom he had ordered to commit the murder. We had in fact
 “ declarations freely made and written with his own hand, but
 “ he was not the less in a situation to arm his Holstein troops,
 “ and other detachments of the country regiments which were
 “ about him, to extort from us many conditions which might be
 “ very prejudicial to the country ; and particularly as several prin-
 “ cipal persons of our court were in his power, whom our huma-
 “ nity would not suffer us to leave him to destroy : we may be
 “ even obliged to re-establish, by an accommodation, many of the
 “ evils which are already done, with the view of delivering those
 “ persons who are retained in his power, and whom he keeps as
 “ hostages in the palace of Oranienbaum, since he has been in-
 “ formed of what we have been forced for the good of our
 “ country to undertake against him. The most distinguished
 “ of our faithful subjects, who were about our person, pressed us
 “ to write to him, and to propose to him to send us, for the
 “ general tranquillity, a voluntary and free abdication, written
 “ in a proper form with his own hand, whereby he renounced
 “ formally the imperial throne of Russia. We wrote him to
 “ this purpose by the general Ismailoff, and we have re-
 “ ceived the following answer, written with his own hand.”

“ —During the little period of time that I have reigned over the
 “ Russian empire, I have experienced that my strength and
 “ faculties were not sufficient to support such a burden, and that
 “ I am not in a state to direct the Russian empire in any manner
 “ whatever, and much less with a despotic power. I also acknow-
 “ ledge that I have been the cause of all the interior troubles of the
 “ state, which, if they had continued much longer, would have
 “ overturned the empire, and consequently covered me with
 “ eternal shame. Having well weighed these considerations, I do
 “ solemnly and without any constraint declare by these presents
 “ to the whole Russian empire, and indeed to the whole world,
 “ that I renounce the government of this empire for all the time I
 “ have to live, and that I do not demand to reign here neither
 “ with a limited power, nor in any other manner whatever; de-
 “ claring also at the same time that I will never endeavour to re-
 “ assume the government by the aid of any person upon earth;
 “ and I confirm this with an oath, and with a sincere and pure
 “ heart before God, and before the whole world. I have written
 “ and signed the whole of this renunciation with my own hand,
 “ this 29th of June (old stile) 1762.—PETER.” —“ It is in
 “ this manner, thank heaven, that we are come to the throne
 “ of this empire without shedding of blood; we were guided in
 “ this enterprize by God alone, whose impenetrable conduct we
 “ shall always adore; and we do hereby assure our most faithful
 “ subjects that we will always pray the Divine Majesty to aid us
 “ to carry the sceptre for the support of our true belief, and in
 “ defence of our dear country, for the extirpation of all iniquity,
 “ injustice, and oppression, &c. &c.”

While Catherine the Second was giving her orders for support-
 ing herself upon the throne, they conducted Peter the Third to
 Czarkazelo,

Czarkazelo, where this prince, it is said, was attacked with a violent cholic, of which he died, notwithstanding all the succours which the Orloffs could give him. It would be very improper for me to mention in this place the report which many of the sensible Russians have propagated on this occasion; indeed this part of the scene was so badly acted, that the most impartial persons were shocked at it; and the empress, to prevent any reflections which might be made upon her conduct, immediately ordered that the body should be exposed in public, and be opened in the presence of all those who would see the operation; but what end could this answer, when those who saw the operation were forbid to declare what they had seen?

The part which the empress acted in this tragedy was a very affecting one, and she acted it to the admiration of all the world; but indeed it required all her great talents to carry her through the various changes which she was to undergo. Much has been said for and against her whole conduct in Russia; she has been condemned by some, and applauded by others. Certainly in her political capacity, and as the sovereign of the Russias, she has manifested great talents and many amiable qualities, and how far her conduct as a private person can be justified is not my business to enquire particularly after: however so much I must undertake to say in her favour, that her case was such as would merit the compassion of the best disposed people. When Catherine left Germany, she was one of the most amiable and best disposed creatures in the world, and certainly if she had been so fortunate as to have had a husband who would have treated her properly, her conduct in private life would have been as great and amiable as it has been in many respects since she has been a sovereign; but, unhappily for her, she was married to a debauched young man,

in every respect as disagreeable as she was amiable, who neglected her entirely as a husband, and treated her with the greatest brutality: notwithstanding this she supported her misfortunes for several years with the greatest gentleness and good-nature; but at last she was forced to give way to the torrent of a debauched and luxurious court.

When her husband came to the throne, he immediately formed a resolution to destroy both his wife and her son, notwithstanding they had been declared heirs to the imperial throne by the same authority which had placed the crown upon his head; even his advocates declare that he had resolved to shut up his wife and son in a convent, to place his mistress upon the throne, and to change the order of succession: there is the greatest reason to conclude therefore that Catherine was led to take the steps which she took for her own and for her son's preservation; but how far some other parts of her conduct are to be justified before the tribunal of humanity, is a matter which the writers of the next age must determine.

The character of Peter the Third will be difficult to portray, if he had any determined character at all; his whole conduct shews that he was naturally violent and passionate, and opinionated to the last degree, notwithstanding the most judicious reflections and reasons were alledged to shew him his errors; all his sentiments of love or hatred were directed by an uncommon capriciousness. He took great pleasure in eating as well as in drinking to excess, and at those times the little reason and reflection which nature gave him were entirely absorbed in brutality and an unruly passion. Peter was not malicious; and when his reason predominated, if we may judge from the regulations which he intended

to

to have made, was desirous of doing great and praise-worthy actions; but he had not a genius for such undertakings, and was too obstinate to be directed. Peter was an admirer of the great qualities of his grandfather, and wished to have followed his plans; but what a great man projects and carries into execution, becomes in the hands of a person who has but a moderate capacity, an ill digested project, which may involve him in the greatest difficulties.

Peter the First was the reformer of his empire, and civilized a brutal and barbarous people: Catherine the First finished in some measure the plan which her husband had laid down; and his laws gained credit and force during her short reign, and were vigorously carried into execution during the reign of Elizabeth, whose clemency softened many of the rigorous laws of her father, and made them agreeable to the whole nation, to whom at first they were quite the contrary, and therefore it might have been supposed that the least change must have appeared to have been dangerous to Peter the Third.

The whole body of the clergy, who in such a bigotted country as Russia will always be very formidable, thought themselves much injured by Peter the Great, who stripped them of a considerable part of their riches, but the military character, resolution, and great qualities of this prince kept them in awe: Elizabeth, who was all clemency and good nature, restored all their property to them, and endeavoured to make them forget what they had suffered from her father; but Peter the Third, without either talents or credit, in a fit of passion attempted to do what his grandfather could not do during his whole reign, and fell a sacrifice to his own folly and vicious conduct.

To

To efface, in some measure, every idea of this extraordinary revolution, and the memory of Peter the Third, it was ordered that all those who had any pictures or engravings of this prince should bring them to a certain place, where proper persons were appointed to receive them; and as his death was not notified to foreign courts with the ceremonies used in such cases, no court went into mourning for him, except that of Sweden, to the royal family of which he was nearly related.

As soon as all the danger was passed, the duke of Holstein, who had been arrested and guarded, was set at liberty, and the empress continued him in the high office of administrator-general of Holstein during the minority of the present great duke Paul Petrowitz. The chancellor count de Bestucheff, who had been disgraced and condemned as being guilty of the crime of treason in the highest degree during the reign of the empress Elizabeth, was by the empress Catherine the Second recalled from his exile and restored to his honours and fortune; as this princess declared that she was convinced of the chancellor's innocence, and that he had been unjustly accused by an odious cabal: she likewise restored the duke of Courland the duchies of Courland and Semigall, which had been for some time before occupied by the son of the king of Poland.

The empress having sent orders for part of her army to return into her own dominions, departed for Moscow, and was there crowned with the greatest magnificence a few days after; but the public joy which this great event occasioned was troubled by the discovery of a horrid plot against the person of her imperial majesty. The traitors were immediately arrested, interrogated, and confronted the one with the other, and having confessed
their

their crimes, the senate, to whom the judgment of this matter was remitted, condemned them to die, as having been guilty of the crime of high treason; but the empress, who would not that her reign should commence by executions, having given time to these miscreants to consider the atrociousness of their attempt, and to repent, spared their lives, and ordered that “Peter Chrowszczeff and Simeon Gouriew should be deprived
“of their rank and of the name of their family, and be excluded
“from among the number of the nobility and of honest men;
“and that after having been rendered thus publicly infamous,
“they should be sent into exile for the rest of their lives to the
“fort Bolcherietzkoi near Kamtschatka; that John and Peter
“Gouriew should lose their rank, and be exiled for the rest of
“of their days to Yakoueska; and that Alexis Chrowszczeff
“should be equally dismissed from his employments and pass
“the rest of his life upon his estates, and, upon pain of
“life, never to set his foot again in any of the imperial re-
“fidences.”

I have already observed, that when the empress Elizabeth came to the throne she declared that no person should suffer death for any crime, which order was observed during her whole reign; but the abuse of this clemency was become so intolerable, that the senate requested Catherine the Second to re-establish the law which ordered that certain crimes should be punished with death.

The year 1762 produced more events in the Russian empire, and was more interesting to this people, than any year since the foundation of their government. The clement Elizabeth, who was loved by all her subjects, and even esteemed by her enemies,
died.

died in the month of January. The Grand Duke, whom this princess had declared to be her successor to the imperial throne in the year 1743, immediately seized the reins of government, and took the name of Peter the Third; but far from adopting the system of the late empress, he was so bad a politician, that, without talents and without reflection, he determined to brave the prejudices of his people, with whose character he seems to have been totally unacquainted. Scarcely was he seated on the throne before he would change every thing, and capriciously reform the whole empire. All those persons who had been exiled as criminals during the reign of Elizabeth were recalled by him, and loaded with honours and riches. The enemies of Elizabeth he declared to be his friends, and her allies were regarded as troublesome neighbours, with whom he would have little to do. The interior of the state was to be entirely changed by the novelties which he was about to introduce. The admiralty and dock-yards which Peter the Great had established at St. Peterbourg, were removed to Cronstadt; the uniforms and discipline of his troops were changed for those of Prussia; all the church-lands were re-united to those of the crown; the Greek priests were ordered to quit their long robes for the common cloathing of the Protestant clergy; all the common people were shocked to see the images, for which they had so much veneration, carried away out of their churches, and as the greatest part of their religion consisted in them, they imagined that their new master despised the Greek church, and attached himself to the doctrines of Luther, notwithstanding the protestations that he had made to the contrary. But during the time that he was, if I may use the expression, preparing all his subjects for a revolt, and when there was a general discontent among all orders of people, he formed the resolution to destroy his wife and son,
change

change the order of succession, and to advance his mistress to the throne; which precipitated his fall, and brought about the great revolution before mentioned.

No sooner was Catherine established upon the throne than she began to reform all the abuses which her late husband had introduced in the empire; she signed the peace which had been concluded with the king of Prussia, and restored him all the provinces which had been conquered from him by the Russian arms during the late war: she adopted her husband's plan respecting Biron duke of Courland, assured that prince of her high protection, and sent a memorial into all the courts of Europe, declaring that she could not discover any just reason for depriving this duke and his heirs of the duchies of Courland and Semigall, and therefore, without acting contrary to justice and equity, she could not avoid acknowledging him as the legal duke of Courland, &c. and establishing him in the entire possession of his duchies. This empress, after the example of her predecessors, not only took the title of imperial majesty, but to avoid every kind of misinformation capable of causing any coolness between her and the other sovereigns of Europe, she declared her intentions touching this matter to all their ministers at her court, and at the same time presented memorials to those courts expressive of her intentions.

The empress Catherine, even before she came to the throne, had frequent examples of the insufficiency of the civil laws of this empire, which were in many particulars repugnant to each other, and ill digested; and she saw the necessity that there was of reforming them. Peter the Great had instituted many good laws and civil regulations, but the violence of his disposition, and

the necessity that he was oftentimes laid under of using severity, made his laws appear to be very unreasonable, unjust, and, in fact, to have been better calculated for the Tartars or for the Calmoucks than for a civilized people. The empress Elizabeth, on the contrary, who meant well, and who gave an unparalleled example of clemency, which, by the way, was by no means calculated for the Russian nation, not yet sufficiently civilized for such a government, softened in a great measure the rigour of Peter's regulations, but at the same time introduced such confusion in the decisions of their courts of justice, as produced a great number of abuses and much injustice. The Russian judges, who in general were very ignorant, but intelligent enough to convert many of the contradictions in the Russian code to their own advantage, oppressed the people in a great variety of civil matters, and most scandalously abused their authority, from the insufficiency of the laws. The empress Catherine the Second resolved therefore to establish a new code of laws; and to carry this matter effectually into execution, she, with a greatness of soul which will always do honour to her memory, called a certain number of the most enlightened men of every province into her dominions, not only to have their opinion in delineating a plan for this code, and to form the instructions which they were to follow in framing the different articles of it, but also to state and answer all the cases which might possibly happen in the present situation of the empire. As an admirer of the Prussian code, she likewise consulted Frederic upon her plan, who informed her, among other things, "that the good laws which she proposed to form, upon the plan which she had published, would require proper lawyers to carry them into execution;" and therefore he advised her to establish, at the same time, an academy of law for forming those who were to be bred up for judges

judges and advocates: for, as he very justly observed, though the laws are very simple, litigious, complicated, and obscure cases will often come before the courts, where it demands a good deal of judgment and experience to investigate the truth, and to divest it of chicanery.

The instructions which this empress has published, to be followed by her lawyers in forming her new code, are in many respects very judicious, as they are literally copied from some of the best authors who have written upon this subject in Europe, and connected with many pertinent remarks upon the nature of civil government in general, and upon that of the Russian empire in particular: but notwithstanding all this, from what I have seen of the Russian nation, I am fully persuaded that this code, upon the plan there laid down, will by no means answer the laudable intention for which it appears to have been calculated. I will briefly state my reasons for embracing this opinion, which are with great deference submitted to the judgment of those who are interested in this matter.

I have already observed, that the greatest part of the inhabitants of this great empire are to this day in a state of the most abject slavery; are bought and sold with the lands upon which they inhabit; are kept in such a state of ignorance, that though they are called Christians, except from their figure it would be difficult to discover that they were human beings; and are in general more cruelly treated than the task-masters of Egypt used the descendants of Jacob: their masters are so many little tyrants, who treat them as so many animals, whose business it is to cultivate the earth, and to procure them a revenue.

The world in general have been misled in their sentiments respecting the feudal tenures, and the rights which the supposed proprietors of fiefs have upon the inhabitants who are so unhappy as to be born upon these tracts of land: I have already observed, in my account of Denmark, how these proprietors of fiefs first acquired their supposed rights and prerogatives, which we may justly call usurpations, over the persons and property of those who were born on them.

In the dark ages of the world, when Monkish superstition and bigotry, those pests to human society, enveloped all kinds of knowledge and reason, the clergy joined themselves to the nobility to extort particular grants from the civil governor, which the latter had no right to grant nor the former to receive, to enslave and to oppress their fellow-creatures, who, by the fundamental laws of civil society, were equally entitled to protection with themselves.

The same wicked practices that were used in Denmark to oppress and tyrannize over the poor farmers, and to bring them into a state of slavery, were used in Russia about the same time, and continue to be practised to this day, for the same purposes.

All laws or regulations made by a sovereign or civil governor, which are contrary to the laws of God and of nature, are null in themselves, and subjects are not bound to obey them; the intent of all civil government being to protect and defend those who are governed. Whenever therefore a sovereign makes a law, which is evidently calculated to oppress and to enslave a part of his subjects, such law is null in itself; for every rational being,

being, who submits himself to the rules of society, is entitled to protection, except he forfeits that right. Those sovereigns who have assumed a right to dispose of the lives and properties of their subjects as they think proper, without such subjects having offended against the civil laws of their respective governments, and supposing such laws to be just and equitable in themselves, have assumed a power which no human being has a right to assume, and all laws which delegate this power to others are null in themselves. When a farmer cultivates my land, I have a right, as proprietor of the soil, to a part of the fruit of his labour, but I have no right to his person, nor to the persons of his children who are born upon my land; so long as he pays me the part stipulated by our contract, and otherways conforms to our agreement, he is in every respect a free agent, and the rest of his property should be secure.

Delegating a power from the crown to the nobility, clergy, and other proprietors of fiefs, to make all those who were born upon such fiefs slaves, to fix them to the lands upon which they were born, and to dispose of their property in an arbitrary manner, or rather not to suffer them to have any property at all, as was the case in Russia, Poland, and Denmark, and other parts, was a most wicked and vicious institution, contrary to the laws of God and nature, and consequently the subjects were justly authorized to oppose it; but when the sovereigns of these states likewise invested these feudal lords with power to punish their farmers, and even to deprive them of their lives and properties as they thought proper, which is the case in Poland to this day, there cannot be said to be any civil government existing in such a state, but rather a system of tyranny and oppression more proper for Hottentots than for rational beings.

During

During the time that the Christian world were, if I may use the expression, buried in Monkish ignorance and superstition, the poor suffered oppression and tyranny, as being utterly unacquainted with the means of supporting themselves; but as mankind are now becoming more and more enlightened, they begin to see the wretched situation in which they were plunged by the infamous and diabolical arts of their oppressors, and will naturally struggle as fast as possible to extricate themselves. This is the only fixed and great fundamental principle of the Russian government, and certainly whoever attempts to build upon it, will be like the man who built his house upon the sand.

The Russians, though they have been for a long time kept in a state of ignorance and barbarity, are human beings, and will one day come to see through the wickedness of their ancient oppressors, who involved them in the wretched situation they are in at present; regard all the laws which have been made to enslave them as null, from their being directly contrary to the laws of God and nature; and strive to regain their rights as members of civil society.

No code of good laws can be established in this country which does not tend to this purpose; and as I do not see any notice taken of it in the instructions which were published for forming the new code by the empress Catherine the Second, I cannot help thinking, that notwithstanding this code was undertaken with a laudable intention, like the whole system of the civil laws now existing in that country, it will one day be regarded as partial and unjust, because more than ten millions of the poor subjects of this empire will thereby be deprived of the rights

rights of humanity as well as of the privileges of members of civil society.

It is true, the empress Catherine the Second, whose amiable qualities are in many respects equal to her great talents, had formed a resolution to annihilate the state of slavery in the Russian dominions, and upon that foundation to form the code of laws which she projected; but she was opposed by many of those who called themselves nobility, and by the clergy, who alledged that they drew the greatest part of their revenue from the farmers being kept in a state of slavery with their families, and that the publishing of such a law would be violently opposed by all the nobility and landholders, bring about another revolution, and perhaps end in a civil war.

I think my readers will not want any more observations to judge of the principles and ideas of the greatest part of the Russian nobility and clergy, and will also from hence perceive that their ignorance of their own interest is at least equal to their inhumanity. Some years ago indeed the free and oeconomic society of St. Peterbourg published a reward for the solution of the following question, “Whether it is most advantageous, and
“most useful for the good of the public, that the farmers
“should possess a landed property, or only a personal property;
“and to what point the right of the farmer to this property
“should extend, that the public may receive the greatest advantage from it?”

I know of no better answer to be given to this question, which to the shame of humanity is still undecided among many of the most reasonable people in several states, than exhibiting the example

of a gentleman, who was proprietor of a large fief in Holstein, and who, as he was an enemy to slavery, and had some just ideas of humanity as well as of sound policy, in the year 1739, sensible that this state of slavery was the bane of industry and of good government, gave one of his farmers a piece of land to hold to him and his heirs as an hereditary farm, upon which he likewise built a house, and furnished him with every thing necessary for cultivating and improving the soil. At the end of five years the farmer was in a situation to reimburse his benefactor, and had moreover acquired a considerable fund for himself. Since this time the gentleman has, every year, given freedom to two families: and these people, who were heretofore lazy, and to whom labour appeared a burden, because it was imposed upon them, being free, and having property of their own, are now become extremely assiduous, and strive to surpass each other in diligence.

Certainly, if this example was followed in Russia, this country might be made in less than half a century one of the most flourishing and powerful empires in the world; but except this regulation is first made, the new code of laws which the empress has projected will not answer the end for which it was calculated, and, like the code of Peter the Great, in less than a century will be disregarded.

Scarcely was Catherine the Second seated upon the throne of Russia, to which she was raised, as it was said, for the protection of the Greek religion, than some of the turbulent and seditious clergy and others, not content with making the most severe reflections upon the empress, who, they said, would have married the person who sent her husband into the other world,
but

but published their reflections in writing, which at length came under the inspection of the synod. Some of these papers were signed by the archbishop of Rastow; and the matter was so clear that he could not disavow it. The synod was much troubled to find one of their own prelates guilty of such a fault; the members of this body laid it before the empress, representing to her the wickedness of the archbishop, and praying that he might be proceeded against with all the rigour of the laws. But the empress, who very prudently declined the decision of a case which regarded her personally, referred it to the judgment of the synod: the archbishop was on this conducted before the assembly, where he acknowledged his fault, was convicted of the crime of high treason, condemned to lose his dignity of bishop, degraded from the order of priesthood, and afterwards he was to have been delivered over to the civil justice. The archbishop was now on the point of losing his life, but the empress would not sign such a severe sentence; she contented herself with ordering the synod to reduce the archbishop to the situation of a common Monk, and send him to a convent on the frontiers of the empire.

Towards the end of the year 1763, whilst the empress was using her utmost endeavours to determine some differences which had again arisen between her subjects and those of China on account of commercial matters, she also pressed the republic of Poland to regulate with her, by commissaries, the limits of the two states; she likewise complained in the memorial which her minister presented at Warsaw upon this subject, that a great number of servants, of deserters from her troops, and of day-labourers, with their families, passed from the frontiers of Russia into the territories of Poland, and were there received by the inhabitants

contrary to the stipulations of the treaty of peace, whereby all those fugitives should have been delivered upon the first demand: and moreover that these emigrations were so much the more disagreeable, as these same deserters often formed themselves into bodies, and with arms in their hands re-entered into the Russian empire, and having there joined massacre to their robberies, they saved themselves again in Poland, where they enjoyed with impunity the fruit of their crimes, as in a place of security. The empress finished this memorial with declaring that she could not support any longer such infractions of the treaty of peace, and the dreadful consequences which resulted from them to her empire, and that if the republic did not immediately take some measures to regulate the limits of the two states, she was resolved to force her Russian subjects to re-enter their territories, and to send detachments of her troops to arrest them wherever they found them.

Affairs were in this situation between the two crowns, when the court of Russia was informed of the death of Augustus the Third, king of Poland, which made a great change in the plan of operations that the empress had proposed, and opened the scene for a new plan of politics, which has since been adopted and carried into execution.

I have already observed, that upon the pressing representations of the senate, Catherine the Second had renewed the laws which inflicted death upon murderers, and which, since the time that the empress Elizabeth came to the throne, had not been inflicted upon any person; an opportunity soon after presented for exercising these laws with the greatest rigour: four villains were convicted of having murdered three women, and were condemned

to be broken alive upon the wheel; but while they were conducting these murderers to the place of execution, the empress, from an impulse of humanity and compassion, but whether well placed or not is not my business to determine, wrote the following note to the judges: “ At the moment these four criminals
 “ are going to suffer the most severe punishment before the
 “ whole assembly of the people, I find myself touched with the
 “ idea of their dreadful destiny; my natural sentiments of com-
 “ passion incline me to mercy, and my love of humanity predo-
 “ minates over the rigour of justice: notwithstanding their
 “ crimes have been enormous, we will suspend the punishment
 “ which the law has ordered to be inflicted upon them; and we
 “ do hereby order that these criminals, in the place of being
 “ punished with death as they have merited, shall be condemned
 “ to the public works during the rest of their lives, to expiate
 “ their crime by hard labour and chastisement: we are in hopes
 “ that this new mark of our love for humanity, and of our in-
 “ clination to shew mercy, will make some impression upon our
 “ subjects, and will excite them to conduct themselves better in
 “ future, that they will apply themselves to contribute to the public
 “ good, and endeavour to avoid all occasions which may engage
 “ us to have recourse to the sword of justice; and in fact, that
 “ these motives of pardon will bring those turbulent and wicked
 “ persons who are disposed to be criminal, to a just sense of the
 “ atrociousness of such a mode of thinking.”

In the beginning of the year 1764 the active part which the empress Catherine the Second took in the affairs of Poland, engaged her to sign a treaty of defensive alliance with the king of Prussia, and a formal guaranty of all the actual possessions of the two sovereigns, together with a reciprocal promise, in case

of war, to assist each other with 10,000 infantry and 2000 cavalry: a secret article of this treaty, and which in all probability was the most interesting of the whole, contained a reciprocal engagement not only to prevent all foreign powers, and even the great nobles of the kingdom, from endeavouring to deprive the Polish republic of her right of free election, and to make the kingdom hereditary, or to make the king more absolute in any manner whatever, but also to prevent, and in concert to destroy, by all possible means the views and designs which tended to this end, as soon as they were discovered; and for this purpose to have recourse to force of arms, to guaranty the republic against the overturning of her constitution and of her fundamental laws: how far these two powers adhered to this treaty, when they found the situation of the affairs of the republic permitted them to break it, will hereafter appear.

During the course of this year another great event happened in Russia, which had no small influence upon her government, and which drew the attention of all Europe upon her: we have already seen the young prince Iwan mount the throne of Russia, and by the revolution which procured the empress Elizabeth the reins of government, disappear again soon afterwards. I have already observed that this young prince, who was born of the marriage of the duke of Brunswic with the young princess of Mecklenbourg, as soon as he came into the world, was designed, though unjustly and illegally, to wear the imperial crown of Russia after the death of his great aunt, the empress Anna Iwanowna, who by the way was herself illegally elevated to the throne, and to exclude all the descendents of Peter the Great; but by the advancement of the empress Elizabeth he was condemned to lead an obscure life in the castle of Schlusselfbourg under a strong

strong guard, who had particular orders that if any person or any armed force attempted to deliver him, they should kill him immediately.

He lived quietly in this prison when the empress Catherine the Second mounted the throne, and as the revolution which deposed Peter the Third, and accomplished this great event, had raised a strong fermentation in the minds of the people, Catherine was fearful lest some ill-intentioned people would make use of Iwan to trouble the public peace; and as the only means which could be properly used to prevent the consequences of such an attempt, she doubled the guards of this unhappy prince, and particularly entrusted him to the care of two officers who were devoted to her interest; but all these precautions were of no effect; a lieutenant of infantry, who was born in the Ukraine, undertook to deliver Iwan by force of arms from the fortress of Schlusfelbourg, and consequently was the cause of his death. The officers under whose immediate inspection he was placed, fearing that he would escape, executed the orders which they had received; the lieutenant who attempted to deliver him was arrested, and afterwards condemned to be beheaded.

This extraordinary event could not fail to excite the attention of the public, and to give rise to many, perhaps ill-grounded, reports; and therefore the empress published a long manifesto to exculpate herself from having any hand in this matter; and in a very artful manner to throw the blame upon the lieutenant beforementioned, whom she loaded with injuries, and, without letting him appear before his judges to answer to his accusations, ordered an officer who was devoted to her interest to go to the fortress of Schlusfelbourg to hear his confession, and to make a
report

report of it to the senate, who from that report pronounced the sentence of death upon the lieutenant, which sentence was afterwards confirmed by the empress, and executed with rigour.

It gives me pain that my impartiality has obliged me to recite this anecdote, because great part of the Russian nation state the fact in a very different manner from what is published in the empress's manifesto. They say, that this lieutenant of infantry, far from being a seditious person, or being disposed to raise a rebellion in the empire, was an ignorant tool of the court, and fell a sacrifice to their intrigues: they say, that he was informed, through different hands, if not from the empress herself, at least from those who received their instructions immediately from her, that such an attempt would be very agreeable to the court, as it would furnish them with an expedient of sending Iwan out of the way without incurring the public censure, and certainly would advance him to great honour and credit: moreover it is said that this officer was entirely attached to the empress's interest; and therefore many of the Russians doubt the sincerity of her expressions of humanity and clemency; for, say they, encouraging clandestinely a man to attempt such an affair, and afterwards when she saw that the public were displeased, to cut off his head for it, was by no means an act of humanity.

I shall not make any reflections upon this transaction; I have stated the facts, and shall leave my readers to judge for themselves.

While this event drew the attention of the Russian nation, the flames of civil war broke out with great violence in Poland, which was generally the case when the throne was vacant. The prince

prince Radziwill had assembled a body of 6000 men under his command, to prevent any foreign troops from entering into the kingdom, while a part of the nobility of Lithuania, who had been gained over by the Russians, formed a confederacy, and addressed the empress to send them succours; whereupon this princess declared that she was sensibly touched with the deplorable situation of Poland; and in the memorial which she addressed to the different courts of Europe to justify her conduct, she observed that she could not see with indifference this state ready to perish by its own hands, and that the rights of humanity alone would not permit her to see such torrents of blood shed in this kingdom, which would evidently end in its destruction. Sovereigns, says this princess, are the defenders of the human species, and the power which they have upon one part of mankind gives them the right of interesting themselves in what concerns the good of the whole. "But independently of these motives," says the empress, "I have personal engagements which absolutely demand my assistance in favour of Poland: being the natural mediatrix, and authorized by the treaties between the different states which compose the republic, after the example of my predecessors, I will watch over the interest of Poland, to prevent any attempts from being made upon the fundamental constitution and laws of this state. I foresaw the critical circumstances of an interregnum; and therefore soon after the death of the king I resolved to fulfil the sacred duties of humanity and of the faith of treaties, and assured the republic that I would redouble my attention to prevent the dangers to which the loss of the king may expose her.—A great part of the nation has called me to their assistance, and I should be guilty not only of a great breach of trust, but also of a breach of public faith, if I hesitated a moment to comply with such pressing

“ pressing motives ; therefore, confiding in the justness of the
“ principles which guided me, and of the sentiments which
“ animated me, I have ordered, according to the desire of the
“ general confederacy of Lithuania, that a body of my troops
“ should march into this province, to assist the good intentions
“ of these true patriots, to prevent any disorder there, to main-
“ tain the liberties of the citizens, and to restore the laws
“ and constitutions of the state to their first vigour. I owe this
“ mark of confidence to the patriotic zeal of the confederacy
“ who, far from opposing the holding of a general diet, the only
“ means of consolidating the constitution of the republic in such
“ a critical circumstance as an interregnum, have ordered their
“ marshal to send deputies to the assembly of the states of the
“ republic, to shew them the purity of their intentions and the
“ justice of their desires.”

The empress finished this memorial by accusing the prince Radziwill with being the most violent of all the Polish nobility to disturb the public tranquillity ; and she assured all the foreign courts that the instructions which she had given to her generals, were to oppose all acts of violence, to avoid scrupulously the commission of any act of this nature ; that they should facilitate as much as possible all the free deliberations of the nobility, that they should keep themselves entirely upon the defensive, and that they should not make use of their arms, except they or their friends were attacked.

Such were the motives, as she declared, which induced the empress Catherine the Second to send her troops into Poland at a time when, according to the constitution of the state, any foreign troops would render null the deliberations of the diet, and
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even the election of the king. Far from resting in a state of tranquillity in Lithuania, the Russians were very soon obliged to take up their arms; the little army of prince Radziwill attacked them with great vivacity near the town of Slonion; the battle lasted near five hours, and was very bloody, the victory being decided only in favour of the imperial troops from their numbers.

From the moment that the empress was informed of the late king of Poland's death, she resolved to advance her friend count Poniatowski to the throne, and all the steps which she took afterwards were so many political measures which tended to this purpose. The confederacy of Lithuania was formed by her intrigues, and her influence effected a great deal in the diet: if she had rested there, in all probability Poniatowski would have been elected, and afterwards things would have gone on regularly; but the sending a great body of troops into the kingdom to keep the nobility in awe, was a measure which tended to destroy the fundamental laws and the constitution of that kingdom, which she had just before declared to all the states of Europe that she was anxious to support.

During the time that her troops were in the northern provinces of Poland, and some detachments sent into almost all the southern provinces likewise, Poniatowski was elected king by a diet, which was assembled near Warsaw; but by the fundamental laws of the kingdom this election was null; and, together with the measures which the empress afterwards took respecting the government of Poland, was the cause of all the troubles and confusion which have since happened in this state, as will be hereafter more fully explained.

Notwithstanding the turbulent situation of Poland, and the offence which the empress's conduct gave to many of the neighbouring states, she lost no time to fix herself upon the throne, and to extend her authority in her own empire.

One of the principal faults of which Peter the Third was accused, was that of annexing all the church-lands to the domains of the crown; but Catherine the Second, who had more address and prudence, engaged the clergy of the Greek church to resign their great property into her hands, and assigned pensions upon the government to all the bishops and other ecclesiastics; from which therefore it will appear that an absolute sovereign, who tempers his authority with prudence and justice, will never fail to carry any point he desires.

This arrangement brought great sums of money into the public treasure, which was ordered to be applied to the support of the invalids, and to other objects of public utility.

This year likewise a great number of Moravians applied to the empress for permission to establish themselves in her dominions, and to have a grant of some of her uncultivated land; and as the synod, after having examined their confession of faith, concluded that the principles of their religion were in many respects conformable to the doctrines of Luther and Calvin, the free exercise of their religion, and the rights of the church, were granted them in the same manner as they were to the other sects of the Christian communion; moreover her imperial majesty ordered her senate, that when any of the Moravians should be summoned to appear before them as a court of justice, they should only demand of them a verbal assurance, conformable to the principles

principles of their religion, in the place of the ordinary oath ; except nevertheless the oath of fidelity according to the common form, and after the example of the other subjects of the empire.

The court of Russia had been for some time in a state of uncertainty respecting the part which the Ottoman Porte would take in the affairs of Poland, and in the troubles which had arisen on account of the election of the new king as before mentioned ; but in the year 1765 they were agreeably surprized at Peterfbourg to see Dervis Effendi appear at that court as ambassador from the sultan to compliment the empress upon her coming to the throne ; nevertheless the shrewd musselman, after a series of compliments, confined himself to the giving verbal assurances that the sultan was and would always be disposed to fulfil the engagements stipulated by the treaties which subsisted between the two empires ; and that respecting the affairs of Poland, his highness would acknowledge as king him who by a free election, that was conformable to the fundamental laws and constitution of the state, the nation had placed upon the throne. It was immediately discovered what part the Turks would take in the affairs of that government, since, according to the fundamental laws of the state, every election is to be regarded as null and void when there are foreign troops in the kingdom, which keep the electors in awe : moreover the court of Russia was already informed that the Kan of the Tartars was assembling a great army, and that the new prince of Walachia was disposed to execute the secret orders of the Porte, which he had received with the diploma of his dignity. However all these considerations could not dissuade the empress from leaving a certain number of troops in Poland and in Courland, nor deter her from

pressing, by her commissaries, the definitive regulation of the limits of the two states, and in concert with the king of Prussia, from making strong complaints to the king and to the republic of Poland, on account of the little regard which the last diet had shewn to the remonstrances of these two powers in favour of the dissidents.

Notwithstanding the great troubles and embarrassment into which the empress had been thrown on account of the affairs of Poland, and of the preparations which the Turks and Tartars were making to invade her dominions, she omitted none of those changes and regulations which are always necessary in a newly reformed and improved empire.

This year great numbers of strangers came into Russia, who were designed to people the vast deserts and uncultivated lands of this empire: her commerce was encouraged by several salutary laws and regulations; her inland navigation, as well as her marine, was considerably augmented and improved; the riotous behaviour of her troops was restrained by a severe and indispensable discipline; and an academy of arts and sciences was established.

The court had likewise the pleasure to hear of the new discoveries which were made by a company of merchants of Kamchatka and Kowima, at the Cape of Ischuktschi, in the seventy-fourth degree of latitude, and descending towards the south by a strait which separates Siberia from Amenea; they likewise discovered some islands in the seventy-fourth degree of latitude, which were inhabited, where they debarked and established a commerce for the finest furs with the inhabitants, especially

cially for the skins of the black fox, which were vastly superior to any that they had ever seen before; they called those islands Aleyut, and they were of opinion, and I think with great reason, that they bordered upon the continent of America.

In the year 1766 the empress was more than ever embarrassed by the affairs of Poland. The new king, it is true, took some measures to endeavour to gain the confidence and affection of his subjects; but the idea of having a king forced upon them contrary to the laws of the kingdom, had much soured the nobility; and the support which the Russians were now giving to the Greeks and dissidents of this state, which was in a great measure countenanced by the king, set the whole kingdom in a flame.

The Roman Catholic clergy, like those who made the silver shrines for the Ephesian Diana, thought their craft was in danger, and used their utmost endeavours to stir up the people, who were very great bigots, to a rebellion, so that the whole kingdom was full of confederacies and intestine factions, and great numbers of the inferior order of the Polish nobility took this opportunity, with their armed vessels, to rob and plunder their neighbours.

The empress of Russia announced, by a memorial which she presented by her minister, to the diet of the kingdom assembled this year, that the Greeks and dissidents, who by the intrigues of the Roman Catholic clergy had been deprived of their churches, and of their rights and privileges as free citizens, should be re-established in all their rights and prerogatives, and in the free exercise of their religion as they had formerly been; she

He was joined in this request by the king of Prussia, who, though he gives himself very little concern about religion, or about the happiness and welfare of mankind, has always been fond of fishing in troubled waters. They demanded that the following articles should be established by the Polish diet:—First, That the churches which appertained by right to the dissidents, and which were illegally taken from them, should be restored to them; that they should not be hindered from repairing those which had been damaged by time or by fire; that they should not be troubled in the administration of their functions, in baptizing of children, in their marriages, burials, in the service of the church, or in praying by sick persons; that they be allowed every thing which is decent and respectable for the divine worship, such as the use of bells and proper dresses for the Greek and Protestant clergy; that they be allowed to have burying-grounds for their respective sects, and in short, be allowed to do every thing which regards the administration of the sacraments and of the prayers commanded in each religion, and which comprehends the free liberty of the divine service.—Second, That the constant and general liberty of religion be fixed permanently in all the kingdom, it is demanded that it shall be passed as a law in the present diet, that in all the towns and villages where there is no church or chapel for the Greeks, or for the other dissidents, those of either of the religions, who would establish themselves there, shall be permitted to have churches, burying-grounds, clergy, and every thing necessary for the exercise of divine worship; that the clergy of their respective religions shall not be hindered by the jurisdiction of the Romish clergy, to perform their duties, and to administer the sacraments to those of their religion.—Third, The free exercise of religion being a divine right, and a point wherein every citizen is interested
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in the highest degree, it is the duty of every well-regulated government to take care that all the subjects of the state should enjoy this right, and not depend in any particular upon another religion. After considering this principle, we must regard the tax which the dissidents are obliged to pay to the Roman Catholic clergy for their burials, marriages, and baptisms, as a great abuse, which is carried to a greater or lesser degree in the different provinces. Such abuses, which are vicious in their principles, cannot be made just and valid by any particular constitution, where those who are intended by them have not the liberty of giving their votes; and therefore it is absolutely necessary that this abuse should be immediately rectified; and if it is agreed by all the orders of the state to preserve the distinctions of the national religion, they should determine upon some regulation and moderate acknowledgment, which should be rather regarded as an honour, than as a tax.—Fourth, The Greek seminary at Mohilow shall not be disturbed in any manner, and shall always continue to educate the youth of the Greek religion, without being subject to be molested or troubled on any account whatever.—Fifth, The bishop and the bishopric of the White Russia, as it is called, with all its appurtenances, shall be forever preserved in the exercise of the Greek religion; and all the churches, whether Greek, or of the other dissidents, shall be supported in the free exercise of their respective communions.—Sixth, That no Greek or dissident priest, or ecclesiastic of what degree soever, shall be obliged to appear before any tribunal composed of the ecclesiastics of the Roman Catholic communion, and that they shall only be appellable before the civil jurisdictions.—Seventh, That it shall not be permitted to hinder the marriages between two persons of different religions, and that their

their children, of the both sexes, shall be educated in the religion of their respective parents.

This declaration, presented to the diet of Warsaw, made a great impression upon the members of this body, especially as they perceived that the empress of Russia and the king of Prussia would not give up any point in favour of the Greeks and dissidents, and even that they were ready to support their demands with a great army, if things came to this extremity. However the reading of this memorial occasioned the most violent fermentation in the minds of the people: the prince bishop of Cracow answered it by a long and violent discourse, which would have occasioned the dissolution of the diet if the king had not interposed, as will hereafter appear; but the empress of Russia was not to be frightened by the thunders of a Polish bishop, nor even by those of the vatican: her minister prince Repnin, who was supported by a great body of troops, used every method to calm the minds of the most violent of the members of this diet; but finding that his endeavours were not attended with success, he began, by the orders of the empress, to exercise the Russian law, and carried off by force the bishops of Cracow and of Kiow, the palatine of Cracow, and his son the president of Podolia.

This act of violence exercised in the midst of the capital of a republic, jealous of her liberties by foreign troops which were introduced against the opinion of a great part of the nation, could not fail of producing the most violent commotion; and the king of Poland, in concert with the rest of the members of the diet, by his resident at the court of Russia, demanded in the strongest terms that the empress would release these illustrious prisoners. So extraordinary a conduct required that at least some plausible

plausible reasons should be given in its justification; and consequently the ministry of Peterbourg undertook, in a memorial which they sent to Monsieur Pfariski as an answer to that which he had presented to them in the name of the king and of the republic of Poland, to justify their conduct: they stated a question in this memorial, "Whether it would be more
 "satisfactory for the empress to please, in this instance, the
 "king and the republic of Poland by releasing their prisoners,
 "or to render both the one and the other the most essential
 "service by retaining them?" They resolved upon the latter, as the only means to support innocence and justice, and to restore peace and good order in the government of Poland.

After having, as they imagined, fully demonstrated by this piece that it was the good of the republic which forced them to arrest these four turbulent subjects, whose enlargement was demanded, the ministry of Peterbourg thought themselves justified by the same title in retaining them prisoners.

It does not appear that the bishop of Cracow, who was the chief of this party, had been guilty of any particular crime, except that, if it may be called so, of opposing with great violence, in the first session of the diet, the nomination of commissioners to enter into a conference with prince Repnin, and to make any decision with him on account of the demands of the Dissidents. He acquiesced, it is true, in the nomination of commissioners, but he was of opinion that they should be ordered to make their report regularly to the diet of what passed in their conferences, and that they should not sign any thing without being fully authorized by the diet, and this not by a plurality of voices, but unanimously. In fact, the bishop by this

means was certain, that nothing could be done in the diet without his consent; and he was fully resolved, like an honest Roman Catholic bishop, rather to see his country destroyed by fire and sword than to suffer the Dissidents to enjoy their legal rights and privileges.

The empress, on the other hand, having ordered those members of the diet who were the most violent in opposing her designs to be carried off, persuaded herself that the great body of troops which she had in that kingdom would impose silence upon the different parties, who would think themselves happy to receive the laws which her ambassador prince Repnin and the assembly at Warsaw should dictate to them; but she was greatly deceived in her expectations: when these laws were made public, the whole republic was divided into as many confederacies as there were discontented nobles, who thought themselves injured by their dispositions. From this time we may date the commencement of the civil wars in Poland, and to this cause we may attribute all the disagreeable effects which have since happened in that kingdom.

The king of Prussia had not yet appeared publicly in this matter, any farther than by presenting memorials; and the pious queen of Hungary had repeatedly given the Poles the strongest assurances of her being disposed to assist them, and to repay them the great obligations which she owed them for supporting the arms of John Sobieski, who saved the august house of Austria from destruction; but both those sovereigns secretly instigated the empress of Russia against the Poles, that they might come in for a share of the spoil. The queen of Hungary and Bohemia in particular shewed such an example of piety and apostolic

apostolic virtue as future ages will regard with admiration, when she entered into a treaty with the empress of Russia and the king of Prussia for the division of Poland, and to guarantee the territories which fell to their lots respectively; for when the empress of Russia was afterwards attacked by the Turks on account of the troubles which she had raised in Poland, the court of Vienna, in consideration of a sum of money and a part of the province of Walachia, absolutely gave up their allies, who had just before helped them to a great part of Poland, to which they had as much right as they have to a mountain in the moon, and pretended to join the Turks to prevent the Russians from prosecuting their conquests against them; but at last it was unfortunately discovered that they meant to cheat the Turks likewise.

What every sensible man foresaw in the year 1767 happened in the beginning of the year 1768. The diet of Poland had scarcely ratified the articles concluded by their commissioners with the ambassador of Russia and the ministers of the other allied powers for re-establishing the Dissidents in their ancient rights, privileges, and prerogatives, before several of their members protested against the measure, and new confederacies were formed in the kingdom. The Russians, who were divided into different bodies, were attacked with great violence in the Ukraine, in Lithuania, and in Great Poland; were sometimes victors, and sometimes vanquished; the discontented Poles could not be brought to receive the laws which those powers would coerce upon them; and nothing can equal the scenes of barbarity, bloodshed, and horror which were acted upon the great theatre of this kingdom, in which the Romish clergy,

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who ought to have been the sons of peace and concord, were the principal actors.

Whilst things were in this situation, and great bodies of Russian troops were daily traversing Poland to crush the confederacies which were daily forming in this kingdom, the court of Petersbourg received the disagreeable news of what was acting at Constantinople. The court of France had long been soliciting the Turks to declare war against the Russians, in hopes to draw off their troops from Poland, and to give the nobility of this kingdom an opportunity to re-establish their ancient form of government; but this year, by means of a large sum of money, the French minister prevailed with the great officers of the Ottoman Porte to adopt this measure.

On the fourth of October a great council was held, at which the Grand Sultan and all the great officers of the Porte assisted, and in consequence of what was there concluded, two days after the Grand Vizier invited Obreskoff the Russian minister to come to his house, where, in presence of a number of bashaws and other officers who were there assembled, he informed him that the measures which the empress his mistress had taken with respect to Poland had given great dissatisfaction to the Porte; and afterwards he asked him if he had received any advice that the Russians had quitted Poland, or that they were ordered to do it soon; or if, in case he had not received any particular advice of this matter, he would warrant them that orders should be immediately given to this effect?

To this the Russian minister replied, that he had not received any advice that such orders were actually given, and that he was
entirely

entirely ignorant of the intentions of the empress his sovereign about withdrawing her troops from Poland; but that he could renew the declarations which he had already made, that her imperial majesty was very much disposed not to undertake any measure that was contrary to the treaties of peace which subsisted between the two empires. Obreskoff demanded a limited time to send a courier to prince Repnin at Warsaw, but the vizier refused to permit him, and at the same time declared, that the Ottoman court would not be treated any longer in such a manner by that of Russia; that they had resolved to declare war against the Russian empire; and that he, Obreskoff, was arrested, and that he should be led to the prison of the Seven Towers; which order was executed immediately.

The court of Russia, with the news of the detention of her minister, received the copy of a manifesto which the officers of the Porte had distributed among the residents of the foreign powers at Constantinople, which tended to justify their resolution of breaking their ancient treaties with the Russians. The Ottoman ministers observe in this piece, that they had religiously observed all the articles of the last peace, and that Russia had violated it in many instances; that this power had not discontinued a moment to build different fortresses upon the frontiers of the two empires, and to place numerous garrisons in them: and with regard to Poland it was observed, that “at the death of Augustus the Third, king of Poland, when the republic, agreeably to the system of Polish liberty, would proceed to the election of a king, the court of Russia, after having by force and violence placed a Polish officer upon the throne, who was of no high birth, who never had a king in his family, and who was by no means qualified for such a high station,

“ station, they continued to support this person in the dignity
“ to which he had been illegally raised, and would endeavour,
“ much against the inclination of the republic, to overturn all
“ the fundamental laws and constitution of the state.”

It was finally observed in this piece, that the court of Russia, contrary to the tenor of the imperial capitulations, continued still to employ troops, provided with cannon and with all kinds of military stores, and under the conduct of their own proper generals, to attack the Polish liberty, and put all those to death who refused to submit themselves to the person whom they had not elected nor ever acknowledged as their king; and that moreover, the Russian troops who had been sent to Balta on the borders of the Turkish empire, with cannon and military stores, had attacked the Musselmén by surprize, and massacred more than a thousand persons, men, women, and children; and therefore it was the opinion of all doctors of the Musselman law that a war against the Moscovites was a just and necessary measure in the present situation of affairs.

Offended and piqued at the imputations contained in this manifesto, especially as the greatest part of them were strictly true, the court of Russia answered it by another declaration of war, wherein she endeavours, but I think very imperfectly, to justify her conduct respecting Poland, by a recital of all that had passed in it since the late king's death, by the necessity that she was under of fulfilling the obligations which the treaties subsisting between the two powers had imposed upon her; and of the attention which she had always observed to avoid any enterprize which might occasion the least umbrage to the Ottoman Porte. She moreover observed that the court of Constantinople

Constantinople would have still continued in the pacific system which she had adopted till the affairs of Poland were entirely regulated, if some other powers, who were envious of the good understanding which subsisted between the Russian and Ottoman empires, had not, by false and sinister suggestions, persuaded the ministers of the Porte to undertake this war.

As soon as the empress of Russia had declared war against the Turks, she withdrew the greatest part of her troops from Poland, which were now employed against their natural enemy, and the principal places which they occupied in this kingdom were occupied by Prussians and Austrians, in consequence of the famous treaty of partition which was now concluded between these three powers.

When the empress of Russia sent her troops into Poland, she declared, in several public pieces which she published and sent into different parts of Europe, that she had no other intention than to support the laws and constitution of Poland; and it is generally believed that at that time she had no other motive than that of causing her friend count Poniatowski to be elected king, and supporting him upon the throne. The king of Prussia from the beginning had no other motive but that of endeavouring by clandestine measures to augment the troubles of Poland, which might give him an opportunity to seize upon Polish Prussia and Dantzic, which he had for several years before been endeavouring to obtain. At the close of the last war he proposed to cede Silesia to the queen of Hungary and to the emperor, as that province had been the cause of all their wars, on condition that the house of Austria would guarantee all Polish Prussia, with the cities of Dantzic and Thorn, to him; but the proposal was
not

not then accepted, as it was supposed that what was demanded was of much greater consequence than Silesia.

The queen of Hungary and Bohemia, notwithstanding all her protestations to the contrary, entered into this confederacy with no other motive than that of securing to herself all that part of Poland which borders upon Hungary, together with the famous salt-mines of that country: both these acquisitions being thought to be equal in value to the whole of her uncultivated kingdom of Hungary. The services which the Poles had formerly done her family were of much too ancient a date to be remembered by so pious a lady; and the infraction of promises, and even of treaties, has been lately proved to be a part of the Austrian apostolic creed. That part of Poland which fell to the lot of the empress of Russia by this famous treaty is not equal in extent or in value to the territories which were allotted to the king of Prussia and to the queen of Hungary respectively, though the former alone was obliged to support the war against the Turks on account of the affairs of Poland; and the queen of Hungary entered into an engagement with the Ottoman Porte to prevent the Russians from pushing their conquests beyond the Danube, and even gave the Sultan repeated assurances that the empress of Russia should give up all that she had conquered during the war, and had an army in readiness to join the Turks if the court of Peterbourg had refused to comply with the terms proposed. However the empress of Russia has luckily finished the war with credit, and has even gained a considerable advantage over the Turks, by obtaining the liberty of a free navigation over the Black Sea, and a free trade with all parts of the Ottoman empire, which will be of much greater advantage to the Russians than all the conquests which they

made during the war; and happily for them it was an advantage with which the sagacious court of Vienna was intirely unacquainted, otherwise they would have made it a pretence for demanding some additional purses of the Ottoman gold.

C H A P. II.

Of the Form of Government at present established in R U S S I A.

WHOEVER peruses the foregoing chapter will easily perceive that the sovereign of the Russian empire is absolute and despotic in the utmost latitude of these words, and master of the lives and properties of all his subjects, who though they are of the first nobility, or have been highly instrumental in promoting the honours and welfare of the state, may nevertheless for the most trifling offence, or even for no offence at all, be seized upon and sent to Siberia, or to drudge for life upon the public works, and have all their goods confiscated whenever the sovereign or his ministers shall think proper; that the nobility and proprietors of fiefs are no less arbitrary and despotic over the lives and properties of their vassals, than the sovereign is over them; and that the sovereign is in many respects in a more disagreeable situation than any person in his dominions: there is no regular barrier between the crown and the people: a bold and enterprising person who can gain over a party of the guards, may in two hours time dethrone the sovereign, and overturn the whole system of government.

The system of civil laws at present established in this state is very imperfect, and in many instances unjust and barbarous; being an assemblage of laws and regulations drawn from most of the states of Europe, ill digested, and in many respects not at all calculated for the genius of the Russian nation. Their police is much upon the same footing; a mixture of some very good and some very bad regulations, which are very improperly combined to support peace and good order among such a rude and uncultivated people.

There is no state perhaps in the whole world where the courts of justice are so corrupt, and their members so ignorant, as in the greatest part of the Russian dominions. A man in this country who has learning enough to read the ukases or laws, and to write his name, thinks himself well qualified to have an important place in their courts of justice; for according to a fundamental law of the state established by Peter the First, the judges are obliged to follow the literal sense of the ukases or laws, respecting the matter which is before them, though they be ever so absurd and contradictory; but it is necessary that he should be more skilful to be an able lawyer. The latter should know well how to distinguish the ukases, and to cite them occasionally in favour of his clients; and if he would be well acquainted with his profession, he should likewise know how to compel in some measure the judges to declare for his clients; for instance, when he has convinced them that he is by no means their enemy, he must know how to cite boldly an ukase of the empress Ann, which favours the case of his client; for though this ukase was repealed by the empress Elizabeth, it is nothing to the purpose, the judges give themselves no manner of trouble to enquire into it; but when they find any ukase favourable to a person who has merited their

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notice by some considerable present, they will always do him justice, though this ukase has been repealed, and declared null by another sovereign.

It is true, strangers who reside in this empire are judged according to the Roman laws, or according to the constitution established in the conquered provinces, and in a separate tribunal; the judges of whom it is composed, all chiefly German lawyers, and even those Russians who are among them were obliged to study the law in some German academy. Peter the First, who established this tribunal as an encouragement for the judges and officers of it, ordered that their salaries should be the double of those of the Russian tribunals, because the latter have much less pain and more profit than the former, and because it requires much more learning and assiduity to be only a secretary in the German tribunal, than to be a judge in the Russian.

Before Peter the Great came to the throne there were very few written laws in Russia; and, as I have already observed, those that did exist before that æra, were by far more rude and barbarous than those of Mahomet or of Tamerlane; but this great prince, who was in every respect the reformer of his country, and before whose time the inhabitants of this empire had not even proper ideas of the most common laws of nature, did as much for their general good, as any human being who had so bad an education as he had, could have done in so short a time.

The sovereigns who succeeded this great prince have successively published a great many written laws or ukases, but they are, strictly speaking, nothing more than an assemblage of contradictory,

tradictory, equivocal, and indeterminate laws; so that often, upon the same subject, there are as many ukases, as there have been sovereigns since the death of Peter the First, and every one of them has treated the same matter in a different manner, according to the different points which they had in view, and consequently each sovereign hath published laws which were dictated by his caprice or passions, and which became so many contradictions in their courts of justice: however it is not pretended that those ukases have always the force of laws, but as I have already observed, they are made use of occasionally according to the designs which have been formed.

The late emperor Peter the Third, who though he was very wrong-headed in many respects, was struck with the absurdity of their judicial proceedings, and had formed a resolution to introduce and establish a body of fundamental laws for the benefit of all his subjects, which should be founded on reasonable principles, positive and applicable to all cases, after the example of the other European nations, and agreeable to that which the king of Prussia had established in his states, under the title of the Frederician code; but his death put an end to his design: however the present empress Catherine the Second, when she came to the throne, seems to have adopted the same plan, if we may judge from the proclamation which she published upon this subject, wherein she complained very nearly in the same terms I have before made use of, that the ignorance and the disorders which had heretofore reigned in the courts of justice, were such as wanted an immediate reformation; and has since published express orders for forming a new code of fundamental laws for the Russian empire, whereby, if we may form our opinion from the desire she expresses to promote the real happiness and welfare of her subjects, it appears that her magnanimity and greatness of soul

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foul would alone entitle her to the high station which she at present fills in the directing the affairs of so many myriads of the human species; but I am much afraid that her plan, without some considerable additions, will not answer the end for which it was calculated, and that for the reasons which I have already stated.

From what has been said therefore it will be clearly seen, that the civil laws of Russia were extremely ill calculated, and worse executed, to promote the true interest, power, and grandeur of such a great empire; and therefore I shall now proceed to enquire into the nature of their criminal laws.

The criminal processes in this empire were anciently formed upon a much more barbarous, and indeed I had almost said, iniquitous plan, than of a civil nature, and were divided into two parts; the one was founded upon a formal and public accusation, as in the case of murder, theft, burning of houses, &c. &c. to which particular punishments were annexed: the other was the secret inquisition, which was chiefly confined to the crime of leze majesty, to that of having projected some change in, or offended against, the religion of the country, and to that of having in some manner betrayed the state. But as there were no laws to specify particularly what were crimes of this nature, this was a door whereby all kinds of oppression, barbarity, and tyranny were introduced into the government.

Heretofore, as I have already observed, the greatest part of their common criminal processes were determined by duel, except the proofs were very clear against the accused, a species of barbarity that was shocking to human nature; but Peter the First reformed the regulations respecting this kind of criminal pro-

processes; so that at present the accused person cannot be condemned but by his own confession, or by the testimony of credible witnesses.

As soon as there was any accusation brought against a person in the secret inquisition of his having been guilty of crimes which should come before this tribunal, even supposing that he was one of the principal personages of the empire, and the accuser was one of the meanest and most profligate slaves, the custom was to seize upon him immediately, and commit him to prison, when all his effects either fell into the hands of the government, and were confiscated, though he afterwards appeared to be innocent, or they fell a prey to the public; for as soon as ever a person is arrested in this country, it is supposed that he is irrecoverably lost. The accuser was likewise secured, and they were both treated in the same manner; they were brought before the inquisitors with the utmost secrecy, where the accuser was to repeat his accusation: if the accused denied the fact, and the other could not support his accusation by witnesses, the latter was condemned to prove it at the expence of his skin, and to be three times knouted; and if he had a constitution strong enough to support this kind of discipline, the thing was regarded as half proved: then the accused was obliged to bring witnesses to prove the contrary, or otherwise he was also ordered to receive the knout three times just as the other; and in this manner they were knouted alternately, till the accused confessed his crime, or till the accuser retracted his accusation: so that by this kind of proceeding, an innocent person, upon the accusation and desire of revenge of one of his slaves, was not only liable to be treated in this barbarous manner, but to lose all his property without any hopes of redemption or redress.

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They had likewise, till very lately, in Russia, a kind of accusation which was called, *crying the word*, of which they formerly made the worst use, and thereby ruined whole families of innocent persons. A servant, for instance, whose bad conduct had drawn upon himself the just chastisement of his master, very often cried the word, to be guarded against this chastisement: "I have, said he, a complaint to make against my master; he has committed one of the capital crimes." These cries were heretofore regarded as sacred, and were so terrible, that when they were made every person who was present turned pale with fear, and the master was obliged immediately to release his servant, and to save himself with him in the first guard-house, from whence they were transported as criminals to the fortress, where the master was exposed with his servant to all the discipline and rigour which I have before described; and what made this kind of process the more dreadful was, that it could not be decided any where but in Peterbourg. If, for instance, an inhabitant of Astracan was accused of any of the crimes in question, he was to be carried, with his accuser, to Peterbourg, and when the process was finished, he was sent back condemned or acquitted; even the officers of the army were formerly in the same situation when they were about to punish a soldier who had been guilty of any crime.

Peter the Third perceiving the bad use that was daily made of these forms of criminal processes, intirely abolished the secret inquisition; so that processes of this nature are now carried on in an open manner, and decided by evidence, and by the confession of the accused, in the German method.

All kinds of ecclesiastical controversies ; all the disputes concerning religion or religious affairs ; and all kinds of differences between ecclesiastics, or between those who are employed in the exercise of their religious rites, are decided finally by the synod, or as they call it, their sacred college, which was established by Peter the Great, as I have already observed. This college is composed of the principal of the dignified clergy, who are nominated by the crown, and who receive their laws from the sovereign in the same manner as do the judges who hear and determine the civil processes.

The right of parents over their children in this empire is greater than it is in any other part of Europe ; and it appears to me that they have adopted this part of their policy from the ancient Romans, or rather from the Greeks. A father has an absolute power over his children ; and neither their age nor their rank can exempt a son or a daughter from the parental authority. The people who are in the lower sphere of life have the same empire over their children, and though the latter are raised to the highest dignities, their fathers have the same right when they think themselves offended, to arrest them, and to inflict what punishment they shall think proper upon them, without being answerable to any person for their conduct ; and even the magistrates dare not demand the reason for such behaviour : they found this right upon the general maxim that parents have nothing but the happiness of their children in view, and consequently that they ought not to be accountable to any person for their conduct towards them, even though they treat them with rigour.

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The right that husbands have over their wives in this empire, is much of the same nature: the husband is the proprietor of his wife, and considers her as part of his goods, which he may dispose of agreeably to his fancy: neither has he any thing to fear if he kills her when he is in a fit of passion, any more than if he had killed his slave. In the northern and eastern parts of this empire the wives of the common people like to be beaten by their husbands, and even glory in it.

The power which the proprietors of fiefs have usurped over their slaves is almost absolute: they pretend that the sovereigns of this state have at different times granted them certain rights and prerogatives over their slaves, as they term them, which in fact no sovereign has a right to grant, and which, as being contrary to the laws of God and nature, are null in themselves, though they should be granted by the most absolute monarch upon earth. They make a traffick of these unhappy wretches, and buy and sell them like sheep or horses, for more or less money in proportion as their wants are more or less pressing. Formerly a master might have killed his slave as he would have killed his dog; but this kind of barbarity being found to be contrary to the maxims of the Christian religion, is at present prohibited; nevertheless the former is not forbidden to beat the latter, which these tyrants sometimes do to such a degree, that the poor slaves have frequently their bones broken, and die of the wounds which they receive. A master of a family in this empire is as much considered in his family, as the emperor himself is by the whole nation; the will of the former being a law in his family, from which there is no appeal, just as that of the emperor is in the empire.

For all matters relating to the different mines in Siberia, and in the other provinces of this empire, there are inferior tribunals under the direction of officers and judges who reside upon the spot; but there is an appeal from them to the general court called the college of mines at Peteribourg.

The power of executing all judicial sentences is lodged in the governors of the respective districts, and is from them communicated to inferior officers.

The ordinary charges of law-suits are very moderate in Russia, but both the lawyers and the judges are very apt to take bribes; and in the Russian courts they are extremely ignorant, the practice of the law being thought to be greatly beneath the character of a gentleman, and is thought to be rather the refuge than the choice even of men of mean capacity. Titles to estate are made more secure, and less subject to contests by the registers that are kept of sales and alienations, and as well of all other engagements relating to them, so that if the purchaser omits to record his transactions in the proper court, he incurs the hazard of a subsequent bargain superseding his: this useful regulation was introduced from the Swedish into the Russian provinces by Peter the Great.

In all criminal matters where the fact is not clearly proved, or where the judges are not very severe, the accused person is admitted to purge himself by oath, to which are generally added the oaths of several other persons who are to vouch for his innocence and integrity.

All capital crimes, such as treason, murder, burning of houses, and other crimes of the like nature, are by the ancient laws of the empire to be punished with death, which is executed by breaking upon the wheel, by beheading or hanging the men, and always beheading the women; to which is added burning alive or dead, and quartering, according to the nature of the crime.

Peter the Great carried their criminal laws into execution with much rigour and severity; but his daughter Elizabeth, as I have already observed, would not suffer any person to be put to death during the whole course of her reign, when all capital offenders were punished by being condemned to drudgery upon the public works in the different parts of the kingdom during life, where they were kept by a strong guard, and treated with great severity in proportion to the nature of their crimes: but as the senate observed to the empress Catherine the Second, the lenity of that humane empress was much abused; so that at present the ancient laws are in many criminal cases carried into execution with the greatest rigour.

The punishment of stealing is a kind of perpetual slavery; the guilty person being condemned to work all his life for the sovereign, in making fortifications, or to some other hard drudgery.

It is seen in the foregoing chapter that the Doctrines of the Greek church are what may be called the national religion of this empire; though almost every other sect of the Christian religion is tolerated and even supported here; but I must now further observe that the Russian church is governed by the synod, who

represent the patriarch, by archbishops, bishops, and other dignified clergy, as well as by the parochial clergy, and the convents, and other religious houses, much in the same manner as they are in the Roman Catholic countries.

I have already observed that Peter the First seized upon the greatest part of the property of the clergy, and annexed it to the crown, which made a great uproar in the whole empire; so that the people in many parts were taught to regard him as the antichrist, and two or three times rose in rebellion against him; and certainly any sovereign who had less resolution, natural talents, and bravery, than Peter the First, would have fallen a sacrifice to such a rash attempt. However, after he had conquered the Swedish provinces on the east of the Baltic, and had nothing more to fear from Charles the Twelfth, he restored the greatest part of their property to them again, and his daughter Elizabeth, when she came to the throne, restored the remainder. Peter the Third, without assigning any reason for his conduct, seized upon all their landed property a second time, and formally annexed it to the domains of the crown. Peter the First pleaded necessity to justify this arbitrary measure; but Peter the Third had nothing to plead in his justification but a capricious disposition, which ended in his destruction. Catherine the Second, who was no less disposed to apply the great property of the clergy to the use of the public, than her late husband, but who had more prudence and penetration than he, by a series of arts and artifices, and by gaining over a great number of the principal clergy by presents and promises, at length made the whole body of the clergy consent to resign all their landed property into her hands, which was again formally annexed to the domains of the crown, and to receive pensions

sions out of the public treasure, in proportion to the rank and situation of their respective members; so that at present all the clergy of the Russian church, as well those who are dignified, as the common parochial curates, receive their respective salaries from the government. The Russian clergy are in general very illiterate and bigotted, and make the principal part of their religion consist in a parade of insignificant ceremonies and superstitions.

C H A P. III.

Of the Manners and Customs of the Russian Nation.

THE great severity of the climate in the principal provinces of this empire, which produces a dry and sharp air, disposes the inhabitants in general to a strong and hardy constitution, which moreover is not a little assisted by hard lodgings, coarse food, and strong exercise; so that the common people in this climate are able to support hardships much better than those who are born in a more temperate climate, and who are more indulgently educated.

The common people in general in Russia are not very tall, but they have very strong muscles, and are capable of undergoing great fatigues: they are extremely ignorant and brutal, though very bold and resolute in war: they may be moved by their leaders, and fixed like so many machines: they have very imperfect ideas of the social virtues; and it appears as if the scenes of tyranny and oppression in which they are born and bred,

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had in a great degree cramped the faculties of their minds, as the severity of the climate has done those of their bodies.

There have been many instances of some of the meanest of the Russian slaves, when they were delivered, if I may use the expression, from the state of bondage in which they were kept, and had acquired some knowledge of men and manners, who, by the force of their genius alone, made such a brilliant figure in the world, as future ages must admire and wonder. Mentzikoff, for example, who from the lowest of the people, by his own superior merit, raised himself to the highest honours, and was justly esteemed as an ornament to the Russian nation. The common people in Russia have no kind of learning or education among them, and although they are called Christians, have no idea of the true principles of the Christian religion; paying a proper respect to their saints, and to the images of such saints, keeping their fast days with some solemnity, and repeating a certain number of prayers by rote, of the true use and meaning of which they have no idea, is the whole of the religion of at least ten millions of people in this empire.

It is true, divine service is celebrated in the Russian churches in the Slavonian language; and by the orders of the church they are taught to believe in God the Father as the creator of the world, in Jesus Christ as the saviour and redeemer of mankind, and in the Holy Ghost as the sanctifier of the faithful; they regard also the virgin Mary and the saints, as intercessors between God and them, conformably to the tenets of the old Greek church: they acknowledge the seven sacraments as they do in the Romish church, and believe that God has instituted baptism to regenerate us, and to purify us from original sin.

fin. But as these articles of faith would make very little impression upon the native of Otahiti who was lately in England, or upon a Hottentot, from their not being instructed in the true principles of the Christian religion, so have they but little influence upon the common people in Russia, who never receive any instruction in the rudiments of their religion, who have no idea of morality, and who are regarded by their brutal tyrants as a race of beings of an inferior nature to themselves.

The general character of the Russian nation is, to content themselves with a superficial knowledge of things rather than to prosecute their studies to any considerable degree: this disposition qualifies them more for a life of labour and fatigue than for that of art and curiosity; and the effects of it are visible in all orders of men in this state, which may be divided into four different classes:—1st. The nobility and gentry;—2dly. The lawyers and clergy;—3dly. The merchants and citizens;—and 4thly. The farmers, labourers, foldiers, and seamen.

The nobility and gentry of Russia are subdivided into many classes, the first of which is composed of the most ancient families of the empire, and those who were created such by the great duke Wladimir the First; the families of foreign nobility, which from time to time have established themselves in Russia, hold, in some sort, the second rank, as they pretend to be all descendents of royal houses: those who were created princes during and since the reign of the czar Alexis form the third class. The common nobility and gentry are composed of those who have had any famous generals or senators for their ancestors, or in whose families the czars have chosen their wives, or who are proprietors of considerable fiefs, or who were raised by their merit.

merit during the reign of Peter the Great, and who are for the most part strangers ; but since the reign of this great prince, no class of the nobility can come into competition with military rank, which is at present the standard which regulates the precedence degrees of men in this empire.

Notwithstanding the great improvements that have been made towards civilizing the Russian empire, the nobility and gentry of this nation, except those who are immediately about the court, are still brutal and tyrannical to a great degree, to which the arbitrary power which they have over the slaves not a little contributes : they regard themselves as so many little tributary sovereigns in their respective fiefs, and look upon their fellow-creatures and subjects as their personal property ; for in this kingdom, as well as in Poland, the riches of a nobleman or gentleman arise not from his revenue in money, but from the number of his slaves : every slave has a certain portion of land assigned him, and from which neither he nor any of his family dare remove ; out of this piece of land he must furnish to his lord a certain quantity of grain and of other provision in kind, or a sum of money in the place of them : besides this, he is to assist his fellow-slaves in doing all his lord's work gratis ; he is to pay all the public taxes ; and, in fact, to obey his lord's will in every thing for which he is called upon.

If the generality of mankind, who are more civilized than the Russians, were invested with such an absolute power over their fellow-creatures, from which there was no appeal, I am afraid they would not be much less tyrannical ; and therefore we must attribute the want of social virtues and of humanity in
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the greatest part of the nobility of this nation to the wretched defect of their government.

The sovereign council, or chancery, which is chiefly composed of the third class of the nobility, is divided into six departments: in the first they treat of foreign affairs; in the second of those of war; in the third of the finances; in the fourth of the public accounts; in the fifth they judge of civil processes which are brought before them by appeal, and in the sixth they judge of criminal processes. The judgments of all the inferior tribunals are brought before these chanceries by appeal.

The Russian nobility seem to be much better calculated for a military life, where bravery and much action are necessary, than for civil affairs; for those who are employed in the latter, though they are laborious in their business, seldom elevate their speculations above what the necessity of their respective employments require. This class of men are very proud and haughty, and too apt to value themselves upon the little knowledge they have of things, though, in general, it is extremely superficial.

From the great connections which they have had of late years with the more civilized nations of Europe, the court and the inhabitants of Petersbourg are changed from the extreme of Cossackism to the other extreme of politeness, civility, and elegance: but the change has been too suddenly made; for upon any little emotion or confusion in the government they fall on a sudden into their ancient state of brutality and barbarity, as was lately the case when Peter the Third was dethroned.

The young Russian nobility travel much at present into foreign parts, and by acquiring that superficial knowledge of men and manners, which is necessary to form the fine gentleman, make themselves tolerably agreeable.

The clergy, as I have already observed, are but very moderately learned, and still less acquainted with the fundamental principles of and disputes about religion, the latter of which being expressly forbidden, and severely punished in Russia: they are very superstitious, and affect great gravity, which gains them high credit among the common people.

Before the time of Peter the Great the clergy of this empire were in a state of ignorance inexpressible; but at present it is necessary that a clergyman, before he is consecrated, should be able to read, write, and to know a little Latin; he must likewise marry a virgin, and if he should happen to go astray from his wife he must no longer attempt to administer the sacraments. If the wife of a clergyman dies, he must no longer administer the sacraments; and if he marries again he loses all his ecclesiastical preferment. There are a great number of Monks and Nuns in this empire, who all follow the regulations of St. Basil. Notwithstanding the law of Peter the First, which fixed the time when they were to make their vows to the fiftieth year of their age, they are at present permitted to enter into the convents at the age of twenty-five or of thirty years.

All the archbishops and the bishops are chosen from among the Monks; they never marry, and even make a vow of chastity. There are only three or four priests in every convent, all the rest live in a state of the greatest ignorance.

No soldiers, farmers, or persons employed in the service of the government are permitted to become Monks ; neither is any man admitted to the vow, even after he is divorced from his wife, except the wife likewise becomes a Nun of her own free will, and they have no children. The Nuns never go out of their convent ; and when they attain the fiftieth year of their age, they have have their heads shaved and make their vows ; but before that time, if they are disposed to marry, they are not only permitted, but even engaged to do it. Heretofore the convents were very rich, but the government hath lately seized upon the greatest part of their property, which, from the severe regulations that their order obliges them to follow, could be of little or no use to them.

The lawyers, I mean those of the Russian courts, are the most ignorant of any class of people in this state, at least of those who pretend to have any knowledge ; and at the same time they are the most dishonest and corrupt. It is true, the laws of this state are in themselves very imperfect, and in many cases unjust and oppressive ; but the manner in which they are administered is horrid beyond all description : so that though a man has a cause which is ever so just and clear, if he have not wherewith to corrupt his lawyers and judges, he has no chance of having any justice done him.

The citizens and merchants are not at all intelligent in trade and commerce, nor would they be able to carry on the foreign commerce of their country without the assistance of strangers : their commerce in the Baltic and at Archangel is chiefly carried on by English, Dutch, French, and German merchants, and that of the Caspian sea by Armenian and Persian merchants.

Fraud and disingenuous dealing pass among the Russians for address and knowledge of the system of trade.

In all æconomical matters and in commercial affairs, the Russians are better calculated to do the drudgery than to speculate or to dive into the mystery of them; they are no less deficient in the arts and manufactures which have been established lately among them, in which they generally set up for masters before they are half taught; it is true, they imitate and copy after such things as are laid before them; but they look upon invention as a kind of magic, of which they have no idea; so that in all such things as require ingenuity, neatness, or dexterity, they are obliged to have recourse to strangers, or at least to be served by those who have for a long time studied their respective trades in foreign countries.

The farmers and labourers, who compose the bulk of the people, and from whom the soldiers and seamen are recruited, are in the most deplorable and wretched situation, and are denied the common rights of mankind; in many of the interior provinces of the empire their ignorance is so great that, except by their form, it would be difficult to discover that they were of the human species.

From the severity of the climate, as I have already observed, they become strong and robust, and by discipline they become excellent soldiers: from the rigour of their situation, they habituate themselves to despise life, and suffer all kinds of punishment and severity with a kind of insensibility.

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The common people have still retained much of the disposition of the Cossacks and of the Tartars; they are naturally lazy, dishonest, and fond of drinking strong liquors to excess; they have no other ideas but those of tyranny and slavery: indeed the wretchedness of their situation makes them indolent and careless about life, as they have judgment enough to perceive that they cannot hope for any thing more in this life than coarse food and raiment; they have likewise sensibility enough to feel, at times, the weight of their oppression, which destroys all kind of emulation among them, and through resentment hinders them from doing any thing more for their oppressors than they are actually obliged to do by force and violence.

Peter the First made a regulation in the empire, which he thought would be greatly for the advantage of the state, and not less so for that of the farmers: he laid a tax upon every steer, which was to be paid by the proprietor into the public treasury in money, and gave the proprietor an unlimited power to raise this money upon his farmers or slaves. This mode of taxing was undoubtedly advantageous to the government, as it saved them a great sum of money in its collection; but it was highly oppressive to the slaves, as it gave their lords an additional power over them, and added greatly to the weight of their oppression.

The situation of those who are obliged to work in the mines is still more disagreeable; they are forced to work hard to break the rocks and the earth, and cannot possibly expect to receive any part of the fruit of their labours more than coarse fare and the skins of wild beasts to cover their nakedness.

The seamen are extremely ignorant of the nautical art, and no less so of the management of large ships in the ocean. The successors of Peter the First greatly neglected their marine, and still more so the keeping their seamen properly disciplined; so that at the beginning of the late war, when the empress Catherine the Second resolved to send a large fleet into the Mediterranean sea, it was found that the greatest part of the arts and improvements which Peter the First had taken so much pains to establish among them, were entirely lost.

The poor, and those who are past their labour, are in a state of misery that is not to be described, there being very few public foundations for their support; and nothing but their great insensibility and ignorance could retain them in such an unhappy state.

Marriage is much honoured in Russia, and even recommended as a holy state, but polygamy is punished with death. Heretofore divorces were very common in this country, and were granted upon every trifling occasion; but they are not so common at present: by a late regulation it is necessary, before a divorce can be obtained, that a man shall prove the infidelity of his wife before the synod; and then this supreme council condemns the guilty person to be shut up in a convent.

Formerly the ceremonies of marriage were very singular in the Russian dominions: when two families had agreed upon the terms of uniting their children, several of the young man's friends were admitted to see the young woman, and afterwards they returned to her intended husband and made their report, generally in her favour, and declared that they thought her very agreeable; but
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the young man was not permitted to see her himself before she came into the chamber where the marriage was to be consummated. When the bride left the altar to go out of the church, the priest threw a handful of some kind of grain upon her, and wished her as many children as there were individual grains; another priest cloathed himself with a sheep's skin, with the wool on the outside, and wished her to have as many children as there were hairs of wool upon his garment. The bride, being all this time covered with a veil, was conducted to the bridegroom's house, where they presented bread and salt to her and to her husband, but they never eat any; and during the time they were at table, the young men and women who were invited to the marriage continued singing all kinds of amorous songs. When they rose up from table, a kind of subordinate priest and an old woman conducted the married couple into the bridal chamber, where they made a short sermon upon the love and good nature which they owed to each other, and afterwards left them for two hours together, when some old women came in to collect the proofs of the bride's honesty, which were exposed before the parents and friends, and the day was concluded with feasting and rejoicing.

This practice, as well as many other ridiculous ceremonies of this nature, is still continued in some of the remote provinces of Russia among the common people, but in all the provinces about the capital they have long since been abolished.

Bathing is almost a general remedy against all kinds of disorders among the common people in Russia: in all the great towns they have baths of hot water, wherein they enter sometimes men and women together; and after having sufficiently heated

heated themselves, and rarefied their blood and humours, they get out as fast as possible of the hot bath and plunge into a cold bath, which is generally very near.

In the country places they heat themselves in stoves as much as nature can bear, and then immediately plunge themselves into a cold bath or into the river, or if it is in the winter season, after they have thoroughly heated themselves in the hot baths or in the stoves, they roll themselves in the snow, which they regard as a sovereign remedy against all sorts of diseases, and also as a preservative against the severities of the climate.

Formerly a long beard was looked upon in Russia as one of the greatest ornaments of a man, and the longer it was the more it was venerated; at present none but the inferior sort of the clergy and the very common people wear such a beard. All the nobility and the better sort of the citizens follow the customs of the other inhabitants of Europe respecting their dress, and there is no court in Europe more brilliant and elegant than that of Russia.

In general the Russian ladies are handsome and well made; but as soon as ever they appear in public, they disfigure themselves horribly by the quantity of paint with which they cover their faces, so that the beauty of this country is only a flower of the spring, which rarely appears in the summer, and never in the autumn. If this unnatural and barbarous custom had been invented by the Calmouks or by the Laplanders, it would not perhaps have become so generally in use; but as it owed its birth to that depravity of human nature which has lately shewn itself so egregiously among the polite inhabitants of
France,

France, like the distemper among the horned cattle, it has made its way into the greatest part of Europe.

In all the other states of Europe, the people who live under the same government are very little different one from the other, but this is not the case with all the people who compose the great Russian empire, where the inhabitants of some provinces differ as widely from those of the others as a Chinese does from a Hottentot; their figures, their manners, and their customs are very different: the inhabitants of the provinces about the Baltic sea, for example, are a civil and well-behaved people, at least those who have had an education; the inhabitants of the Russias, properly speaking, are not yet emerged from their ancient state of barbarity, notwithstanding all that has been done by Peter the Great and by his successors for their reformation; the Cossacks and the Calmouks are very little changed from the state that they were in 200 years ago; and the Tartars, except being improved in their military discipline, are in the same situation that they were in during the reign of Tamerlane.

Those hords of Tartars who possess a great part of the kingdom of Kasan are tall and robust men, with large faces, black hair, and thick eye-brows, and wear a long beard; they are good horsemen, and when disciplined become excellent soldiers: heretofore they were Mahometans, and they have still retained circumcision and some other practices of that religion; but in general they are very ignorant, and are in many respects fallen into a kind of Paganism: those hords who are called in common the Tartars of Ufa and the Caskirs, can arm 50,000 men. On the contrary, the Nogais Tartars, who inhabit the southern parts of Astracan, are of a very diminutive stature, and are very

disagreeable in their figure, but their wives are in general very handsome; they live continually in their tents, and support themselves by hunting and fishing: of late years some of them have begun to cultivate the earth.

This hord rather regard themselves as the allies than as the subjects of Russia, for the assistance of whom they are obliged to take up arms when they are called upon, and then they furnish 20,000 horse: they profess the Mahometan religion.

By the permission of the Russians the Calmouks came and occupied a part of the kingdom of Astracan at the beginning of the present century; heretofore they inhabited a part of Great Tartary: they are in general idolaters, are of a moderate stature, and have very disagreeable figures, having a flat face, little eyes, a crooked nose, and large ears; and they serve as light troops in the Russian army.

The great kingdom of Siberia is for the most part, as I have already observed, inhabited by the Mahometan Tartars, who were the ancient inhabitants of the country, and who at present occupy the fortified towns and strong places in common with the Russians; but the open country is inhabited by different kinds of people, who are savages and idolaters, and who live almost in a state of nature.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Laws, Customs, and Policy of RUSSIA, respecting Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce.

WHOEVER reflects upon the state of Russia before Peter the First ascended the throne, will be filled with amazement, when he sees or hears of the changes which this empire has undergone since that æra, and how much it is divested of its ancient state of ignorance and barbarism. Towards the close of the last century Russia was very little known in the commercial world, and if the czar Peter the First had not by the force of his superior genius perceived the wants of his subjects, and the great advantages that commerce would procure them, and with a resolution peculiar to himself resolved to supply those wants, and to procure them those advantages even against their inclination, they might to this day have remained in their ancient state of barbarism.

Before this great prince left his own territories, he was totally unacquainted with the laws and regulations of other states, as much in fact as his own subjects were then, and as much as the Tartars are at present; but by travelling through foreign states he informed himself of the means which were necessary to be adopted to render a state flourishing and to make his subjects happy, to draw them out of their ignorance and indolence, and to excite emulation among them for trade and commerce, the only sure means whereby a nation can be exalted to true greatness and power.

The liberty and encouragement likewise which this great prince gave to strangers to come and settle in his dominions, especially to men of genius and to merchants and traders, contributed not a little to this great effect; for by having frequent intercourse with sensible and civilized people as well as with barbarians, the subjects of a state will always acquire knowledge; by seeing the good qualities of the one they will learn to imitate them, and by seeing the faults of the other, they will learn to avoid them.

We may often find in the bosom of the least civilized nations some wise and useful regulations; and there is no nation whose laws and policy are so perfect but that her subjects may find something worthy of imitation even in Tartary or in Lapland. Every nation is in the situation of a learned man; the more the arts and sciences with which he is acquainted extend his knowledge, the more he is convinced that what he still wants surpasses very much that which he knows, and that he is only beginning his pursuit of knowledge: on the contrary, the less a man knows the better opinion he has of his own knowledge, and the high ideas which he has of his merit prevent him from ever acquiring a perfect knowledge of any thing.

It has been already observed that one of the ancient and fundamental laws of the Russian empire was, that no person, from the first nobleman down to the meanest of his slaves, should be permitted to go out of the state without the special permission of the sovereign; and by another law of this state, more than seven parts in ten of all the people in the Russias are actually in a state of absolute slavery, and though they are called Christians, are bought and sold in the same manner as the negro slaves

slaves are in the West-India Islands, to which the clergy have not a little contributed; I say, by a supposed law, because it does not appear that ever those people gave up their rights as human beings; and no sovereign, as such, can have any just power or authority to make such a law, which from its nature would be null; neither will prescription fix and make legal an authority of this nature; and consequently it may be justly said, that the greatest part of the people in the Russian nation have been for several centuries past kept in a state of ignorance and slavery, and denied the rights of human nature by the arbitrariness of the government, and by the wickedness of the nobility and clergy.

Peter the Great made an alteration in the first of these laws, permitted his subjects to travel into foreign parts, and invited strangers to come and settle in his dominions, and to their great praise it must be said, the successors of this great prince have, at least in this respect, followed his example, and have thereby introduced the arts and sciences into the empire, from which they have already drawn a considerable profit; their navigation and commerce have hereby been considerably increased; their territories better peopled; and from a few fishing huts, Peterbourg has been raised to be the capital of the North.

Peter the Third, the late emperor, abolished this law entirely, and gave all the Russian nobility the liberty of travelling into foreign countries to enlighten their understanding, and to correct the ferocity of their manners, which certainly was a noble edict, and worthy of a great prince; and it is to be hoped that some future prince, by following the example of his ancestors, will endeavour to inspire them with those free and noble sentiments

ments which are natural to a man who is born free; however the consequences of that liberty which they have obtained will be more real than may at first be imagined. If, for instance, a Russian gentleman leaves his country, whether to travel for his amusement, and to make observations upon foreign states, or to spend some years in the military service of some foreign power, he cannot fail to cultivate his genius and to enlarge his understanding, which will enable him to judge of many things of which till that time he had not the least idea: he will be drawn insensibly from the presumption which he had of his own merit, and will find himself confounded when he sees a people who are more civilized than his own countrymen; and when he returns into his own country, his friends and relations, and even his slaves, will more or less endeavour to imitate his new acquired manners and fashions.

Montesquieu has very justly observed, that in every state the desire of glory and grandeur increases with the liberty of the subjects, and likewise diminishes with it. Glory cannot be accompanied with servitude and slavery. This happy idea makes the subjects of every free nation do with pleasure and with taste what no despotic sovereign can obtain from his slaves but by the greatest rewards and punishments: but in this country of which I am treating, honour, reputation, and virtue are regarded as imaginary phantoms when they are not accompanied with the favour of the prince, with whom they exist and die almost in the same time.

All the employments and dignities in this state are only so many attributes of the will and caprice of the sovereign. A man who to-day occupies one of the highest dignities in the
state,

state, may to-morrow, without any just cause, see himself reduced to the necessity of gaining his bread in the most servile employment; and this is the reason why many Russian gentlemen, who are raised to the highest dignities in the state, often commit the most mean and base actions: they have very imperfect ideas of honour and virtue, and they know that the greatest lord in the empire is not less in many respects a slave than the meanest of his servants, and that it only depends upon the will of the prince to put the master upon the same footing with his valet.

I have seen men of great genius among the Russians who would have cultivated the arts and sciences with credit and reputation, if the sentiments of slavery had not almost impelled them to the most abject and groveling actions; they have such a servility of soul as to be almost insensible of shame: hence therefore in a country where the bulk of the inhabitants are born and educated in the most abject slavery; where the nobles are brought up in ideas of despotism and tyranny; where they, as well as their slaves, are on the least suspicion liable to be banished, and to have all their effects confiscated, and where every man stands in fear of even the whispers of his neighbour; in a country like this it will be almost impossible to see the arts and manufactures flourishing in that splendour, in which they are observed in those countries where every subject is free, where the oppressed servant will always find justice against the oppressing master, and where the artificer and manufacturer works and employs his natural talents for his own benefit without fear or controul.

The Russian empire is extremely well situated, and has all the natural requisites of a commercial state.

In all the provinces of the Russias the soil is rich and good, and yields all the natural productions that can be raised in the northern climates. Her ports in the Baltic, in the Euxine, and in the Caspian seas, as well as those in the great northern ocean, are well calculated for an extensive foreign commerce, and the communication between these ports by her great and navigable rivers and artificial canals, which traverse the greatest and most fertile parts of the empire, must make her interior commerce very considerable, as well as facilitate the exportation of her natural productions, namely, her iron, copper, hemp, flax, wood, fine furs, and other skins, linseed and other grains, fish, pot-ash, leather, wax, tallow, cordage, all the materials for ship-building, and fundry other small articles of commerce, which will always secure the balance of trade in her favour, if the government is but tolerably favourable to the mercantile part of the nation.

The Russian dominions are at present nearly as extensive as all the other European states; and yet, according to a just calculation, they do not contain much above eighteen millions of people.

In the year 1768 it was found that the number of males who paid the capitation tax were nearly as follows: merchants 201,000; workmen of different kinds 17,000; farmers who contributed to the support of the militia 431,030; workmen of different kinds whose parents were unknown 2200; others who were not incorporated in the classes of the different trades 4500; farmers who occupied the crown lands 552,000; slaves who were employed in the mines of the crown 65,300; other slaves of the crown who worked in the mines and at the manufactures

factures of particular persons 24,150 ; of the Mahometans and Idolaters who have lately been converted to the Greek church 60,000 ; of the different kinds of Tartars 280,000 ; the slaves of several merchants and others who were privileged, and who, though they were not proprietors of lands, might have slaves, 9800 ; slaves who cultivated and occupied the lands that were appropriated for the support of the court 420,000 ; slaves who cultivated the lands which appertained to her majesty independently of the right of the crown 58,000 ; slaves who cultivated the lands confiscated to the crown 12,800 ; slaves of the nobility and gentry 3,640,000 ; slaves who cultivated the lands which formerly belonged to the clergy and to the religious houses 896,100 ; other slaves and workmen, not regularly classed, who were employed in menial drudgery upon the public works, and as well in the mines and at the manufactures of particular persons 41,000.

Hence it will be seen that there were six millions, seven hundred and fourteen thousand, eight hundred and eighty males, who paid the capitation ; old men and children were included in this calculation, but the women and girls were not ; and therefore if we double this number, we shall find thirteen millions, four hundred and twenty-nine thousand souls : I must likewise observe that none of the troops, which at that time were about 350,000 men, nor any of the nobility, gentry, and clergy of the whole empire, who were about 200,000, were included in this number, as they are not liable to this capitation tax. The strangers who reside in the empire, of what profession, or of what country soever they are, are all exempted from this tax ; and so are likewise the inhabitants of the conquered provinces ; namely, of Livonia, Estonia, Ingria, Carelia, and part of Finland, and of the Ukraine, as well as several hords of the Tartars,

and all the idolatrous people of Siberia, which, upon a moderate calculation, will make the number of the inhabitants in the Russian dominions amount to above eighteen millions; and by comparing the extent of this empire with that of any other state of Europe, with Spain, for example, which is the least peopled of any other European kingdom in proportion to the extent of her territories, it will be found that Russia, in proportion to her territories, is five times less peopled than Spain, and consequently it will be seen that this state can never make any great figure in manufactures, while she has not inhabitants sufficient to cultivate her lands, and to improve the productions of agriculture, the first and great object of commerce.

There are still very extensive tracts of lands in the most fertile and populous provinces of this empire, which remain uncultivated and full of woods: in the kingdoms of Kasan and Astracan there are whole provinces where there are only a sufficient number of inhabitants to conduct the cattle and the sheep to their pasture; and the Ukraine alone would support two millions of inhabitants by the produce of agriculture more than she has at present: moreover if the farmers had been free, and were suffered to enjoy the fruits of their labours, five millions would do more towards manuring the land, and raising the fruits of the earth, than the whole number of their inhabitants do at present. The common people, when they are oppressed, become idle and worthless, and think of little else than sleeping away their time, except they are roused to action by violence, as they have reflection enough to perceive, that if they toil and distress themselves ever so much, common food and raiment are all that they can possibly expect in such a situation.

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Though agriculture has been always and justly esteemed the surest basis of the riches and power of a state, by the pretended laws of this empire, and by the despotism and violence of the government, those who are employed in it labour under the greatest oppression and tyranny: not content with laying the whole burden of recruiting both the army and navy upon them, and oppressing them with a heavy capitation tax, the government has delegated a pretended power to the proprietors of the fiefs to oppress and tyrannize over them in another manner, and to tear from them even the little portion of what they have gained by their hard labour.

However, as Russia in her present situation is able to furnish iron, hemp, flax, most of the materials for ship-building, and almost all the natural productions of the North, she will always have some balance of trade in her favour with the maritime powers, particularly with England and Holland.

In the year 1762 the exports from Peterbourg to Great Britain and Ireland were for 3,201,433 roubles (five roubles make a pound sterling) and the imports from those kingdoms were only for 1,083,627 roubles. In the year 1765 the exports were for 4,381,393 roubles, and the imports only for 1,179,738 roubles. In the year 1766 the exports were for 3,309,096, and the imports only for 925,731.

In the year 1762 the exports from the port of Riga to Great Britain and Ireland were for 573,656 roubles, and the imports from those kingdoms only for 14,287. In 1765 the exports as aforesaid were for 716,897, and the imports only for 17,313.

In 1766 the exports were for 591,068, and the imports only for 17,814.

In 1762 the exports from the port of Archangel to Great Britain and Ireland were for 143,614 roubles, and the imports only for 16,343; and from the port of Narva the exports as aforefaid were for 495,763 roubles, and the imports only for 9813. In 1765 the exports from Archangel as aforefaid were for 407,047 and the imports only for 12,661; and from the port of Narva the exports as aforefaid were for 567,234 roubles, and the imports only for 13,248. In the year 1766 the exports from Archangel as aforefaid were for 225,198 roubles, and the ^{im}ports only for 11,500; and from the port of Narva the exports were for 425,198 roubles, and the imports only for 10,050.

Great Britain receives from Russia a very large quantity of iron yearly, of hemp, of flax, of linens, of Russia leather, of saltpetre, of tallow, of sail-cloth, and of a variety of other small articles to the amount of the sums before-specified.

Russia receives from Great Britain sugars, indigo, beaver-skins, English beer, tin, lead, dye woods, cloths, shaloons, flannels, Norwich stuffs, Manchester velvets, brass wire, and a variety of other small articles to the amount of the sums above-mentioned; so that it will be seen from hence that the trade which Great Britain has with Russia is greatly in favour of the latter: the immense quantities of iron, hemp, flax, and sail-cloth, which the former takes off, make the weighty articles in the balance against her.

In

In the year 1766 the exports from Peterfbourg to France were 829,079; and the exports from the port of Riga as aforefaid only for 236,432, though the imports were for 528,178 roubles. France receives from Ruffia a confiderable quantity of hemp, and of materials for fhip-building to the amount before-mentioned; and Ruffia receives from France wines and other articles of luxury, to fuch an amount as makes a confiderable balance againft her.

In the year 1766 the exports from Peterfbourg to Holland were for 402,952 roubles, and the imports were 310,004 roubles; the exports from the port of Riga as aforefaid were for 945,708 roubles, and the imports only for 249,402; the exports from the port of Archangel as aforefaid were for 53,149 roubles, and the imports only for 15,076; the exports from Narva as aforefaid were for 55,198 roubles, and the imports only 17,026. Ruffia receives from Holland all kinds of fpirits, of Eaft and Weft India goods, and of the fruits and wines of Spain and Portugal; and Holland receives from Ruffia iron, hemp, fail-cloth, wood, grain of all kinds, and a variety of other fmall articles to the amount of the fums before-mentioned, which give a confiderable balance in favour of the Ruffians. Ruffia has likewife fome trade with Denmark, Sweden, and the other ports of the Baltic, but it is of no great confequence: her trade with Hambourg, Bremen, Lubeck, Wifmar, and Roftock, is advantageous, and brings a confiderable balance in her favour. Her inland trade with Poland, with part of the Turkish dominions, with Perfia, with India, and with China, has been and ftill is greatly in her favour, particularly her trade with Perfia, from whence fhe draws a confiderable quantity of raw filk yearly, and other materials for manufacture. Her fine furs of
Siberia

Siberia are sold at a great price in Poland, in the northern parts of the Turkish and of the Persian dominions, and even in China.

But what makes the Russian commerce the more advantageous to the whole empire, is the communication which is formed between the different provinces by means of the inland navigation; so that the whole country partakes more or less of the advantages arising from it; and if the subjects of this state were so far instructed in the useful arts as to be their own navigators, they having all the materials necessary for ship-building among themselves, their profits would be considerably augmented; but on the other hand, this empire can never become a great commercial state in proportion to her powers, as long as her government is so despotic, and so subject to revolutions; as no merchant who has any considerable capital would chuse to risk it all in a country where even on the least suspicion he is liable to be sent into banishment, and to have all his property confiscated; for though the sovereigns of Russia, since the time of Peter the Great, have made the commercial interest of the state one of the great objects of their policy, in a country so subject to revolutions and changes, and where property is not secured by the fundamental laws of the state, but every thing depends upon the will of a despotic, and it may be tyrannical, sovereign, or minister, who is often guided, and as often constrained, by the will of a lawless rabble, no merchant will have the fortitude to enter into extensive projects in favour of trade; which is the reason why most of the foreign merchants, who are at present established in Russia, act only as commissioners for companies of merchants in other foreign states, and thereby carry on

the commerce for the Russians, who are afraid to enter too far into it themselves.

Peter the First would have divested himself of a part of his despotic power, because he saw that it was contrary to the spirit of commerce; and wished at the same time to give their freedom to all slaves; but he perceived that the great commotion which such a measure would make in the empire, would counteract many of his other projects, and throw every thing into confusion.

In the year 1745 the empress Elizabeth published an order to banish all the Jews out of the empire, because they had remitted, by bills of exchange, into foreign states the money of those who had been banished into Siberia, as well as that of the strangers who were in her service. The exchange therefore which is the means of transporting money from one country to another, and without which the best established commerce could not be supported, is contradictory to the laws and police of Russia. No person can go out of the Russian empire without a passport and permission for so doing; and the laws are very severe against those who remit their effects into foreign states without having this permission.

These laws have not been so beneficial to the Russians, as formidable to foreigners, who will never think of bringing any considerable property into a state where there is such danger of losing it. Such laws and regulations tend very much likewise to lessen their public credit: what merchant will send any considerable quantities of merchandize into a state where his correspondents, although they are honest and well disposed to pay him,

him, by the caprice of a minister, are liable, without any just cause, to have all their effects confiscated, and to be sent into banishment at an hour's notice, unless he has the prospect of selling them at an extravagant price, and making some great and sudden advantages by them? Every prudent merchant will insure and sell his merchandize in proportion to the risk he runs, and consequently these laws must be diametrically opposite to the commercial interest of the subjects of this empire, and no less so to the true interest and policy of the state.

No kingdom can be brought into a flourishing situation in proportion to her powers by trade and commerce, while the bulk of her subjects are in a state of slavery. Commerce and slavery are inconsistent with and destroy each other, like an acid and an alkali, whenever they meet they raise a fermentation, and annihilate their respective essential properties.

Though Peter the Great took much pains to introduce the arts and manufactures into his dominions, they are still in their infant state, and for the reasons that I have just now specified, which will be corroborated by comparing the number of manufacturers and merchants in the Russian dominions with that of the slaves. It will be very difficult to find a slave who is a good manufacturer: no slave will ever apply himself to works of art and ingenuity; he may be forced to cultivate the earth, but force will not enliven his genius, and animate him to excel in manufacturing. If we look through all the civilized parts of the world, the works of art and manufacture are in the greatest perfection where there is the greatest freedom, where there is a security of property, and where the artist and manufacturer can enjoy the fruits of his labour in peace and quietness, without

without any dread of oppression or of the oppressor's power: there the desire of appearing conspicuously in the world makes him employ his talents to the greatest advantage, and there emulation animates him to excel.

Upon the whole, I think we may justly observe, that till the inhabitants of Russia are restored to that state of liberty from which they have been most iniquitously driven, and till they are suffered to enjoy the natural rights of mankind, and to think and act like rational beings, this great empire will never be famous for her arts, manufactures, or commerce; and that till this firm foundation is laid, whoever attempts by splendid codes of laws, or by any other means, to effect this great work, will be acting like the man in the gospel who built his house upon the sand, which was overturned by the natural efforts of the elements, because it was unnaturally formed.

CHAP. V.

*Of the Revenues and Resources of this Kingdom, and of her
MILITARY FORCE by Sea and Land.*

WHEN Peter the Great ascended the throne, the whole revenues of the Russian empire did not amount to six millions of roubles, with the capitation tax included, which was indeed sufficient to support the government in its ancient state of mediocrity, though many of their taxes were paid in kind according to the Turkish usage: but by the powerful efforts which this great prince made to increase the grandeur

and extent of his dominions, and to have a communication with the Baltic, from a state of the finances which was made in the year 1725, a little before the death of this emperor, the public revenues, including the tribute of the Tartars which was paid in money, but independently of all those taxes which were paid in kind, were near fifteen millions of roubles; and this moderate sum was then sufficient to support the civil government and to maintain 340,000 men, who were employed in the service of government by sea and land.

In the year 1767, after Catherine the Second had annexed the church-lands to the domains of the crown, the public revenues amounted to twenty-five millions of roubles; at the beginning of the late war with the Turks, after the government had imposed some additional taxes, the public revenues were found to be full twenty-eight millions of roubles, and there were then full 400,000 men employed by sea and land in the government's service. All the debts which the government contracted during the war which they carried on against the king of Prussia were paid off before they entered into the last Turkish war, so that the revenues abovementioned were likewise clear of all incumbrances; and certainly, if the government of this great empire had been so moderated that her inhabitants could adopt the title of subjects instead of that of slaves, there is no power in Europe, nor perhaps in the known world, that has so many resources in case of necessity.

In the southern provinces of this empire there are tracts of several hundred leagues in extent of as rich soil as any in the whole world, well watered, and traversed by large navigable rivers, which yield all the natural productions of the vegetable
kind

kind that a temperate climate can produce. In the northern and mountainous provinces there are mines of gold, silver, copper, and iron, which have lately been worked to great advantage, and abundance of rich furs.

It will perhaps be asked, by what means were the public revenues so considerably augmented in so short a time, when so little improvements were made in the agriculture and manufactures of the state in proportion to the number of her inhabitants and to the extent of her dominions? To which I answer, by their gaining so many ports for foreign trade in the Baltic sea, which by means of their navigable rivers take off all the superfluous productions of agriculture from the interior provinces: their iron and hemp are by this means conveyed to foreign markets at a small expence, and the Swedish trade for the former is considerably diminished. A great balance of trade in their favour has brought a considerable sum of money to circulate in the empire, which has enabled the inhabitants to pay a great tax upon all kinds of foreign merchandizes that are imported for their consumption.

The custom-houses of Petersbourg, Riga, Narva, and Revel produce an immense revenue; some years past it amounted to above eight millions of roubles; and the mines of gold and silver in Siberia have been worked by the crown to a very great advantage.

In the beginning of the reign of Peter the First all the maritime force of Russia consisted in a few row-gallies, and at present all Europe behold with admiration the fleets of this nation triumphant in the Mediterranean sea. I have already ex-

plained the motives which induced Peter to have a naval force, and likewise the extraordinary efforts which he made for this purpose: he happily succeeded, and towards the end of his reign his fleets triumphed in the Baltic as those of his descendents have lately done in the Archipelago against the Turks. Peter built his ships and established his marine upon the best plans then known in Europe; but from the great improvements which have since been made in England and France in the construction of ships of war, and from the natural awkwardness of the Russian ship-builders and carpenters, the ships of that nation were till very lately very much inferior to those of other nations, and were almost ruined in launching: however, by the assistance of an ingenious English admiral, who was lately in their service, their ships are built at present upon as good plans as any in Europe, and launched without any inconveniency. They have now at least sixty ships of the line, and between thirty and forty frigates; but notwithstanding they have all the materials for ship-building in their own country, their dock-yards, store-houses, &c. are very badly provided; and such is the wickedness and avidity of many of their ministers, that during the last war, the empress had no stores in her dock-yards and houses, the ministers had sold these stores to France, from whence they were conveyed to their enemies.

At the beginning of the last war which they had with the Turks, it was found that all the useful regulations which Peter the Great had established in the marine were entirely forgotten; and had it not been for the address and experience of some English sea-officers, who were then in their service, they would have made a despicable figure, even against the Turks.

Their

Their admirals and captains have such an absolute power over the common men, and even over the inferior officers, and use it so tyrannically, that it is impossible their marine discipline can continue upon any good footing. Their dock-yards at Cronstadt are very well calculated for a marine power, and very well defended by several batteries of cannon; but there have been no improvements made in them since the reign of Peter the Great: in fact, a man of less penetration and resolution than Peter would not have been able to make any reformation in the public affairs of this nation. They have lately built several ships of war at Archangel, where they have likewise a dock-yard and great plenty of wood, particularly of firs; but these ships are much inferior to those that are built at Peterbourg.

Besides the large ships of war and frigates which they have to oppose an enemy upon the ocean, they have at least 150 row-gallies, which they formerly used upon the lakes against the Swedes, and which are still useful in many parts of the Baltic, where it would be dangerous for any large ships to enter. These gallies are better calculated for landing troops than for any other purpose; they are not proper to oppose large ships of war or batteries of cannon: they carry generally two pieces of cannon, and from fifty to one hundred men, who attack with small arms.

The Russians have likewise a naval force which they employ against the Turks, Tartars, and Persians in the Black and Caspian seas, which is composed of a number of small frigates, sloops of war, and row-gallies: indeed Peter the First built some fifty-gun ships upon the river Don and at Asoph; and if it had not been for the fatal affair of Pruth, whereby he was obliged to give
up

up all the projects which he had formed upon the Black sea, this enterprizing prince would have established a marine in those parts equal to that which he established in the Baltic. At present, as the Russians have secured a free trade with the Turkish dominions through the Black sea, they will undoubtedly put their marine in this part of the world upon as respectable a footing, in proportion to the force of their enemies, as that which they have in the Baltic and on the ocean.

The regular troops which the Russians have at present in their service, exclusive of the Cossacks and of the Tartars, are full 350,000 men: but such is the great extent of their territories, and the number of the fortresses which they have to support from Petersbourg to the borders of China, that it is with difficulty they can bring 150,000 into the field to act offensively against an enemy.

I have already taken notice of the great difficulties which Peter the First had to bring his troops to observe a proper military discipline, though he was assisted in this by several able and experienced officers, and particularly by Mentzikoff, who was an ornament to his country, and likewise set forth the great advantages which this discipline procured the Russian empire, which was then in a most barbarous situation: but such is the strange and unaccountable inattention, to give it no harsher a name, of the Russian nobility and gentry, that they have made no improvements in their military discipline since the death of this great prince, though they have often been at war; and were it not for the efforts of the German and other foreign officers, whom they have in their service, the Russian military discipline would soon fall into a worse situation than it was in when Peter

2

the

the Great began to reform it. The common Russian soldiers, as I have already observed, from a principle of superstition, are taught to despise life, and by this means are brought to stand their ground, and keep their ranks perhaps equal to any troops in the world: the king of Prussia, when he attacked them repeatedly with his best infantry, could never make them give way, nor even break their ranks. They are likewise very bold and resolute in attacking, and if their generals possessed that judgment and knowledge of military affairs which is necessary to direct properly the motions of such a soldiery, certainly they would be equal in every respect to the best troops in Europe; but this is wanting: merit is not rewarded in Russia at present as it was in the reign of Peter the Great, when a man who sold tarts and fruit in the streets became chief general of all the Russian armies as the just reward of his superior abilities: every thing is upon a very different footing from what it was in those days; there are many young fops who have the rank of lieutenant-general and of general, whose want of talents and military skill can only be equalled by their impertinence and turbulent disposition: there is now no Peter to keep them in order, and to distinguish the man of merit from the blockhead. The present empress Catherine the Second does every thing, it is true, that a woman of great talents can do in such a situation: but alas! she is afraid of their cabals, is often obliged to give way to them, and to shut her eyes against many abuses which a man of resolution would have immediately rectified. The Russian guards are become as formidable and turbulent as the Strelitzs were when Peter the First came to the throne. The officers of this corps, which is at present at least 10,000 men, are for the most part Russians, and the sons of the nobility, who have great influence and power over the men, and who in two
hours

hours time can lead them to rebellion, and overturn the whole government. These officers, who have a high idea of their own merit, the effect of ignorance and pride, must be managed: they demand high rank and posts in the army for which they are not in any respect qualified, and the empress, to avoid the ill effects of their cabals and intrigues, is obliged to comply with their requests; hence it is that there are so many bad officers of rank in the Russian army, and that men of merit are at present disregarded and overlooked in this country. These regiments of guards are the worst troops of all the regulars in the Russian empire: they have not been in action, as far as I can discover, since the time of the emperor Peter the Great; so that now they cherish the idea that they have no other duty than to guard Peterbourg and the person of the sovereign, and, like the ancient Strelitzs, to endeavour to overturn the government when any bold and audacious villain will put himself at their head.

There are a great number of fortified places in the Russian empire, many of which are very strong and regular fortifications, particularly those in the provinces conquered from the Swedes by Peter the First, and those which were fortified by that emperor. They have a chain of forts which pass through Siberia, through Great Tartary, and extend to the frontiers of China: they have likewise a great number of strong fortresses in the kingdoms of Kasan and Astracan to keep the Tartars in awe; as well as in the Ukraine and upon the frontiers of the Turkish dominions, not only to stop the impetuosity of the Turks and of the Crim Tartars, but also to keep the Cossacks and the Calmouks, their own subjects, in proper order. The town of Smolensko, upon the borders of Poland, which was
fortified

fortified by Peter the Great, is a place capable of maintaining a long siege, and so is Riga the capital of Livonia.

The Russians have a very large train of artillery, which is distributed in different parts of the empire to be ready on any occasion, when perhaps it might be difficult to transport military stores.

From what has been said therefore it will clearly appear, that the Russian empire is at this time in a situation to defend itself against all the powers of the North; and as the government has now a powerful army, which is tolerably well disciplined, at command, and a very considerable revenue, without any debts but what were made during the short war which they have had lately against the Turks, together with great resources for raising both men and money upon any sudden occasion, this empire is also in a situation to act offensively both by land and sea, especially if a bold and enterprising prince comes to the throne who has capacity and judgment to direct his military forces in a proper manner.

But after all, considering the present situation of Russia, her growing commerce, her arts and manufactures still in their infancy, her want of inhabitants in proportion to the extent of her territories, such a prince would not act as a patriot and as the father of his people, who would engage his subjects at present in an offensive war.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Causes of the various REVOLUTIONS which have happened in this State.

WHEN we look back upon the brief history which has been given in chap. I. of this work of the rise and progress of the Russian government, it will clearly appear that this government, like those of Denmark and Sweden, has passed through a great variety of revolutions, which have always originated in a great measure from the causes which I have often before observed; namely, that either the prince or governor attempted to rule contrary to the dispositions and interests of the bulk of the people, whilst they had the power in their hands to assert their rights; or that the people, by falling into discords and divisions among themselves, gave the sovereign the opportunity of joining one party to crush the whole, and to form the government as he thought proper. It is true, in the revolutions which happened in Sweden, the people always endeavoured either to support or to regain their ancient rights and privileges; and in all those which happened in Denmark, except the last, either the nobility or the clergy gained some considerable advantages over the crown; but in the revolutions which have been effected in Russia, the people, who through the ignorance and superstition of the clergy have been kept in a state of the grossest ignorance and barbarity, as well as in the most abject slavery, never attempted to gain any thing for themselves, I mean not any real advantage: they had been taught to venerate the persons of their sovereigns, as well as their families, though they were ever so tyrannical and oppressive.

It

It was not the oppression and tyranny of Boris Godunow which made the Russians rise in rebellion against him, but the blind attachment which they had to the family of their ancient sovereigns; and though Griscza shewed no disposition to behave tyrannically or to oppress the people, but on the contrary shewed a humane disposition and a desire to govern with gentleness, as soon as there was any suspicion of his not being the true Demetrius, and the legitimate descendent of their ancient sovereigns, he was immediately massacred, though they had just before taken the oaths of fidelity and obedience to him.

Basil Suiski was dethroned and shut up in a convent for the same reasons; and if the kingdom had not been almost exhausted by a long scene of civil wars, several of the succeeding emperors would have shared the same fate.

Happily for the family of Romanow, that violent enthusiasm which the people had for the family of their ancient czars was a little abated when the son of Theodore, afterwards patriarch of Russia, was elected czar.

The sovereigns of Russia were not in the same situation that the kings of Denmark and Sweden were in with regard to their respective subjects. The power of the former was absolute and despotic; they had not entered into any formal capitulations or [covenants with their people as the former had done. The bulk of the people in Sweden, and the nobility and clergy of Denmark, were contesting with their respective kings for their rights and privileges; whereas the bulk of the people in Russia were in those days so extremely ignorant and barbarous, that they had no other ideas but those of tyranny and slavery.

A late remarkable instance of the attachment of the Russians to the family of their ancient sovereigns was the advancement of the empress Ann to the throne, contrary to the order of succession that was established by Peter the First and his empress according to the fundamental laws of the state; but all those laws, and the particular merit of Peter, were not of any weight against the enthusiasm of the people. Indeed some avaricious ministers acted as agents in this affair, but their power would have been of no great consequence if the people had not been disposed to succour them. The empress Ann could have no pretensions to the government by the laws and regulations of the state; even her father was illegally advanced to the throne. The regulations which this empress made in favour of her niece's son, and of her favourite Biron, were unjust and illegal: they were unjust, because they were calculated to cut off all the pretensions of the descendants of Peter the Great, to whose activity and zeal the Russian empire was so much indebted; they were illegal, because as she was illegally advanced to the throne, and consequently was not to be regarded as their lawful sovereign, she had no authority to make such regulations: but notwithstanding all this, such was the veneration which many of the Russian nobility had for the family of their ancient czars, so ignorant were they in general of the great benefits which they had received by the indefatigable industry of Peter the First, and such imperfect ideas had they of gratitude, or of any of the social virtues, as the child which the empress Ann ordered to be her successor was descended from the czar Iwan, they would have supported him upon the throne, if this princess had not destroyed all her own projects by giving such an absolute power to her favourite Biron; a power which turned the head of this favourite, made him forget that he was standing upon a precipice; instigated him to
perpetrate

perpetrate all kinds of extravagancies against the Russians, and at length was the cause not only of his own destruction, but likewise of that of his young emperor.

The Russian guards, those instruments of rebellion and oppression, were employed, first, to arrest and ruin Biron, whom they had just before sworn to support as regent of the state, and afterwards to dethrone the young emperor, to whom they had likewise sworn fidelity and obedience.

The revolution which advanced Elizabeth to the throne was brought about chiefly by the intrigues of a bold and enterprising man who was her surgeon; it was he who, by presents and promises, brought over a party of the guards to declare in her favour, and, in fact, who was the active instrument of dethroning the young emperor Iwan the Sixth, which was done in less than three hours time, and without any bloodshed.—Behold the uncertainty and instability of a despotic government! The clamours of a baker were the remote cause of dethroning a late Sultan of Constantinople; and the intrigues of a surgeon were the immediate cause of dethroning the emperor Iwan the Sixth of Russia. It is true, the greatest part of the Russian nobility and clergy were highly offended at the conduct of the empress Ann, as well as at the conduct of her favourite Biron; and though they were not immediately concerned in effecting this revolution, they knew that such a measure was intended, and rather favoured than opposed it.

When the empress Elizabeth came to the throne, she perceived that there was no dependence to be placed upon the faith or oaths of those who were about her, and immediately took every

every prudent measure to gain the good will of her subjects, and to give some stability to the government: she called the young duke of Holstein into Russia, who was in fact the lawful heir to the throne, and declared him to be her successor; and as Peter the First had been remarkably severe in the punishments which he inflicted upon those who had offended against him or against his laws, so did Elizabeth, on the other hand, carry her clemency to the highest degree, and thereby endeavoured to make her subjects forget that she was come indirectly to the throne. She particularly endeavoured to secure the clergy in her interest, by restoring them all their lands which her father had seized upon and annexed to the domains of the crown; she received all the nobility with great affability, and rewarded every one according to his merit: so that after a reign of great clemency for near twenty-one years, it was supposed that the Russians would have forgotten much of their rebellious and turbulent disposition; and undoubtedly, if her successor Peter the Third had behaved with tolerable decency, his enemies would not have had it in their power to have accomplished a revolution for dethroning him: but his conduct to his Russian subjects was so extravagant in every respect, and his partiality to strangers and to his Holstein subjects so flagrant, that it was impossible his reign could have been of any long duration, supposing that those who acted the principal parts in that revolution had never existed.

When Peter the Third came to the throne, he declared that he would follow the steps of his grandfather Peter the First; but he soon deviated from them, and, as being a weak man, he was not capable of judging how far his power and authority would support him in making the reformation which he intended,

and which in fact was very much wanted. He did more than a weak prince should have done on such an occasion, and he did not do so much as a prudent prince ought to have done. His conduct towards the clergy made that turbulent and self-interested body his secret enemies; his conduct towards his guards gave great offence to that rebellious corps; and the partiality which he so openly shewed to strangers greatly disgusted the nobility and gentry: but neither of these parties had any distinguished chiefs to lead them on to action, or, when the government was unhinged, to new model it, and thereby to avoid that confusion and anarchy which would otherwise follow; if Peter had kept upon a good footing with his family, they would not have attacked him so suddenly; and if he had taken the precaution which a prudent prince would have done in such a situation, and broken entirely that turbulent body of guards who have been so often made the instruments of rebellion, or sent them into the remotest parts of the empire, as Peter the First did the Strelitzs in the same circumstances, and called his Holstein guards, or some of his marching regiments, commanded by officers in whom he could confide, to his assistance, his enemies would have found great difficulty in carrying their plan into execution, and perhaps would have fallen much short of what they intended. In fact, though Peter's conduct, which was more imprudent than oppressive and tyrannical, had greatly alienated the hearts of his subjects from him, if he had acted with that firmness and activity with which his grandfather conducted his affairs, he would soon have silenced the clamours of his enemies, and have carried all his projects into execution without the least difficulty.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

and which in fact was very much wanted. He did more than a weak prince should have done on such an occasion, and he did not do so much as a prudent prince ought to have done. His conduct towards the clergy made that turbulent and self-interested body his secret enemies; his conduct towards his guards gave great offence to that rebellious corps; and the partiality which he so openly showed to the officers greatly disgusted the nobility and gentry; but neither of these parties had any distinguished chiefs to lead them on to action; or, when the government was unwilling to new model it, and thereby to avoid that confusion and anarchy which would otherwise follow, if I might say upon a good footing with the family, they would not have attacked him so suddenly; and if he had taken the precaution which a prudent prince would have done in such a situation, and broken entirely some turbulent body of guards who have been so often made the instruments of rebellion, or sent them into the remotest parts of the empire, as Peter the Great did the Strelitzes in the same circumstances, and called his Holstein guards, or some of his marching regiments, commanded by officers in whom he could confide, to his assistance, his enemies would have found great difficulty in carrying their plan into execution, and perhaps would have fallen much short of what they intended. In fact, though Peter's conduct, which was more impudent than oppressive, and tyrannical, had greatly alienated the hearts of his subjects from him, he had acted with too much timidity and activity with which his great labor conducted his affairs, he would not have detected the treasons of his enemies, and have carried all his projects into execution without the help of others.

THE
RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRESENT STATE
OF THE
NORTHERN GOVERNMENTS.

BOOK V.

Of the Constitution, Laws, Policy, Customs, Religion, Commerce, Revenues, Resources, and Military Power of POLAND: With some particular Observations upon the Revolutions and Civil Wars which have always been so destructive to this Kingdom, from the Defects of its Government.

CHAPTER I.

*Of the RISE and PROGRESS of the present Government in
POLAND.*

THE losses which the kingdom of Poland has sustained in the last as well as in the present centuries, have considerably contracted its limits. Formerly Silesia, Lusatia, Pomerania, Livonia, Smolensko, Severia, Czernichovia, and all the palatinate of Kiovio in the Ukraine, were part of the possessions of Poland. The Cossacks, who were heretofore subjects to Poland, are now become her most dangerous

Vol. II. X x enemies,

enemies. But notwithstanding all these dismemberments, as well as those which have been made in our days by the united confederacy of the empress-queen of Hungary and Bohemia, of the empress of Russia, and of the king of Prussia, the kingdom of Poland is still of a considerable extent.

Before the late division of this kingdom by the powers above mentioned, it was composed of four grand districts. 1st. Great Poland. 2d. Little Poland. 3d. Red Russia. 4th. Polish Prussia.

Great Poland is situated between Pomerania, Silesia, and Lithuania: it contains the provinces of Cujavia, of Masovia, and of Great Poland, properly so called. Every province is divided into several governments, which the Poles call palatinates; and these last are again subdivided into districts, to which they give the name of starosties, which we should call bailiwicks. Great Poland contains the palatinates of Posnania, of Kalisch, of Sirad, of Leucici, and of Rawa. In the province of Cujavia we find those of Czerſko, of Plotzko, and of Podlachia.

Little Poland is situated between Great Poland, Silesia, Hungary, and the Red Russia: it is divided into three palatinates; namely, Cracovia, Sendomir, and Lublin.

Royal Prussia is situated to the north-east of Great Poland, and is joined by Pomerania and by Ducal Prussia, which likewise formerly appertained to Poland; it was erected into a kingdom by the emperor Leopold, and contains three palatinates; namely, that of Pomerelli, of Culm, and of Marienburg. This is part
of

of the district that was lately ceded to the king of Prussia by the present king and his party in Poland.

Red Russia is bounded on the east by the Dneiper, on the south by the Dneister and the Krapack mountains, on the north by part of Lithuania, and on the west by Little Poland. This large district is divided into three provinces, Red Russia properly so called, Wolhynia, and Podolia. In Russia there are three palatinates; namely, Lemberg, Belsko, and Chelm. The greatest part of this district was lately ceded, by the authority aforesaid, to the empress-queen of Hungary.

The principal cities of these provinces are Warsaw and Dantzic; the latter is a rich city, and carries on a greater commerce for grain than any city in Europe; it is a free town, well fortified, and has a fine harbour; but it is under the protection of the king of Poland, to whom it pays annually a tribute for being supported in its liberties and privileges. The magistrates and the greatest part of the inhabitants are Protestants, but the Catholic religion is tolerated in it.

Warsaw is situated upon the Vistula, in the duchy of Masovia, and is at present regarded as the capital of the kingdom: the king has his residence in this city, where he likewise convokes the states; and in an open field near this place the kings of Poland are generally elected.

Cracow, or Cracovia, which was formerly the capital of Poland, is still a very considerable town, and one of the most important in the kingdom; its university is much esteemed.

We may likewise class in the rank of very considerable towns, Culm, Thorn, Marienbourg, Elbing, Posen, Lublin, Sendomir, Leopold, Kaminiec, and Braclaw.

To these vast provinces, which form the kingdom of Poland, and which are divided into twenty-three palatinates, we must join the great duchy of Lithuania; which, in fact, is less united to the kingdom as a province than as an allied principality. This duchy is obliged to furnish one third part of the troops that are designed to compose the army of the crown, and one quarter part of all the sums of money that are granted for the support of the prince. This duchy is divided into four provinces; to the west and south is Lithuania, properly so called; to the north-east is Russian Lithuania; to the north-west, and towards the Baltic sea, Samogitia; and to the north, Polish Livonia. Lithuania, and the Russian Lithuania, are divided into eight palatinates; and the capital of this great duchy is Wilna.

As Courland is under the protection of Poland, it will be necessary that I should likewise give a short description of it: this duchy is situated between Samogitia and Livonia, and is divided into two parts, Courland properly so called, and Semigall. Mittau is the capital of this province and the residence of the sovereign duke, who is elected by the states of the province; but as this is an ancient fief of the crown of Poland, he must be invested in his rights and privileges by her king. Lutheranism is the predominant religion in this duchy.

If we may give any credit to the historians who have delivered to the world the ancient history of this kingdom, the Poles are a part of the ancient Slavonians, and these descended directly from

from Japhet: but we will leave the fables which have been recorded of these people enveloped in obscurity, and proceed to recite the probable conjectures which have been handed down to us by authors of credit.

Tacitus gives us a short account of these people; he pretends that their manners and customs were very different from those of the Germans; the latter having some regulations and forms of government among them, when the former lived almost in a state of nature, and supported themselves by robbery and plunder: but as they fought on foot, and defended themselves with shields, he thought them to be a different nation from the Scythians, who fought on horseback, and had no other habitation but their waggons.

This barbarous people, says he, live in a state of liberty, and have no idea of hope or of fear, and prefer living in this manner to cultivating the earth and taking care of their families, of their property, or of those of their relations and neighbours.

They have no fear, says he, of their fellow-creatures, nor even of the Gods, which is very extraordinary in human beings. They have no occasion to make laws or vows, because they are not accustomed to desire any thing which they cannot procure for themselves.

Such, according to Tacitus, were the ancestors of the Poles, who, when the Goths and Vandals possessed themselves of Gaul, Spain, and Italy, left their ancient habitations, and came and occupied the northern parts of Germany and the north-east
parts

parts of Poland, which had been in a great measure abandoned by those people.

The Slavonians lived almost in a state of nature till about the year 550, when we find they elected a chief or governor called Leck, who, according to some authors, was the brother of Creck first duke of Bohemia, who endeavoured to civilize these people, till then in a state of nature, and to attach them to some particular spot, as they had no regular habitation till this æra; for this purpose he built a castle, or rather a little fortification, formed of earth and trees, as a place of retreat; and as they were clearing away the wood to form the foundation of this new fortress, it is pretended that the workmen found the nest of an eagle, which in the Slavonian language is called Gniazdo, and which gave the name of Gnesna to this town, composed of wooden huts, which was built within the fortification. This, they say, was the origin of the town of Gnesna; and to preserve the memory of this event, the eagle has always formed a part of the arms of Poland.

The descendants of Leck reigned in Poland about one hundred years as their sovereigns; afterwards the nation became tired of obeying one chief, and put themselves under the conduct of twelve palatines or woiewodes, who were their generals (in the Slavonian language the word *woina* signifies war, and *wodz* a chief or general): but finding they had substituted twelve tyrants in the place of one chief, and being weary of this government, they deposed these woiewodes, and proclaimed Cracus to be their duke or sovereign, who having been one of those woiewodes, and having governed with discretion and policy, was preferred before

before all the others. The whole nation at this time had voices in the election of their chief.

Cracus reigned near thirty years, and was the founder of the town of Cracow, near which they shew the place to this day where he was buried. After his death his eldest son was elected to the government; but he was soon after assassinated secretly by his younger brother Leck, who was thereupon advanced to the government; but as his crime was afterwards discovered, the Poles deposed him and banished him out of the kingdom. However, as the memory of Cracus was still dear to them, they placed his daughter Vanda upon the throne.

This princess lived only two years after her advancement to the throne; and after her death, as she was the last of the family of Cracus, the Poles put themselves again under the conduct of twelve chiefs or palatines, who very soon became twelve tyrants, and cruelly abused the authority which was entrusted to them, under pretence of maintaining it. A scene of civil wars ensued, which made the inhabitants of Hungary believe that they had then a favourable opportunity to attack the Poles, and accordingly in the year 751 they entered Poland, and committed all kinds of cruelties and barbarities. Surprized at this sudden attack, the Poles assembled themselves in great haste; they had no idea of repelling an enemy's army who were proud of their great success, but they ran to submit themselves, and to receive the laws of their new masters; and their palatines, who were still more mean and ignominious than the lowest of the people, were the first who proposed this measure. However a common man, who had then no credit among the people, called Przemyslas, undertook to save his country. During the obscurity of the night, he placed
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upon a high ground, opposite to the camp of the Hungarians, branches of trees arranged in files in such a manner that they represented soldiers armed with lances and shields. At the break of day, when the enemy perceived this supposed body of troops, they sent a detachment to inform themselves of its force; but as the soldiers advanced, these fictitious forces appeared to retire into a forest that was behind them: the Hungarians, supposing that their enemies were flying before them, ran into the wood with great precipitation and disorder; this was what the artful Przemyſlas waited for, as he had hidden all the Poles there, who, as soon as they saw the Hungarians, attacked them with the greatest fury, so that very few escaped their vengeance. Przemyſlas made his men now take the cloaths and the arms of their enemies who fell before them, with these they descended into the plain, and entered by different ways into the camp of their enemies, who were not prepared to receive them, where they made a most terrible slaughter: the rest of the Hungarian army saved themselves by flight, and spread the terror of the Polish arms to the remotest parts of their country.

Przemyſlas having saved the state was soon afterwards recompensed; the people, judging that he who had prudence and courage enough to be their deliverer when their affairs appeared to be desperate, would certainly have resolution, prudence, and justice enough to govern when the nation was in a state of tranquillity, accordingly he was unanimously proclaimed duke of Poland. It is true, he answered the expectation of all his subjects, who lived very happily under his reign, but his death plunged the kingdom again in a state of anarchy; the palatines pretended to re-assume their former powers; but each of them

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intrigued

intrigued to gain the whole sovereignty for himself, and the nation dared not to pronounce between the twelve candidates.

In this extremity the whole body of the people assembled themselves, and resolved to chuse him for their king who was the best horseman, and who could win the race, which they should propose to the candidates. Among those who presented themselves to dispute this great prize was a young man called Leszek, who was no less bold than artful, and who thought that his artifice would procure him the crown; he threw a great quantity of pointed nails over the course, and covered them with sand; and to prevent his own horse from receiving any injury, he ordered him to be shod in such a manner, that the whole bottom of his feet was covered with iron; but his fraud was too glaring to be hidden; two young men discovered it, but the one was too fearful to make it public; however the other resolved to take advantage of it, and accordingly entered the lists with the other candidates, after having shod his horse in the same manner as Leszek had done. All the horsemen started from the post, but Leszek soon left all his rivals far behind him, except the young man before-mentioned, who constantly kept pace with him, and sometimes outstripped him. Leszek, mortified at seeing himself defeated, redoubled his efforts, and was the first who came in for the prize, when the young man declared the artifice and malice of his rival. The people immediately ran to know the truth of this accusation, and finding it to be well founded from the confession of Leszek, they cut him in pieces, and without any deliberation advanced his accuser to the throne, who took the name of Leszko the Second, mounted the throne in the year 804, and though a person of mean birth, was a man of great talents and justice, always supported a respect-

able simplicity, and never forgot the meanness of his original; he always preserved the cloaths which he wore before his advancement to the throne, which were often brought to him to remind him of the obscurity of his former situation, that all his subjects were his brethren, and that he was obliged to use his utmost endeavours to make them happy. Moreover he was no less bold and resolute than just and benevolent: the Polish nation loved him, his enemies feared him, and even his neighbours could not refuse him their esteem.

In the year 815 this prince died, and his son Leszko the Third, who inherited many of his father's virtues, succeeded him by the unanimous consent of the people. This prince joined his forces for some time to those of the enemies of Charlemagne; but afterwards, finding that he could not resist the power of this emperor, he demanded his friendship, and gave him succours in the wars which he undertook to bring the Saxons to submission.

Leszko the Third had a great many natural sons, to whom he gave fiefs, which they held of Popiel his legitimate son, who mounted the throne after him; and this was the first institution of fiefs in Poland; these fiefs were upon a very different footing from those which are at present in that kingdom: the proprietors of the fiefs in those days had very little more than what we call at present manor-rights over the rest of the inhabitants, who had freeholds in their lands, and had voices even in the election of their kings: how these proprietors of fiefs gained that ascendancy over the rest of their fellow-subjects, which they pretend to have at present, and the wicked and oppressive arts which they took
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to reduce them to a state of the most abject slavery, will hereafter appear.

The annals of Poland give us a most frightful portrait of Popiel the First, whom they paint as the most vile and debauched monster that ever appeared in that kingdom. Though the people only regarded their king in those days as their general, and the arbitrator of their disputes and differences; yet this prince, though he is described as being in many respects weak and inactive, attempted to govern with an absolute authority; he pretended to invest the proprietors of fiefs with great power, which they exercised with rigor over the rest of the inhabitants, and from the resistance which the latter made, threw the whole kingdom into confusion and anarchy: he changed the seat of government from Cracow to Gnesna; and afterwards, as he was apprehensive his subjects would attack him, and drive him out of the kingdom, he removed it to a castle which he had built in the middle of the lake Guplo, where he lived with his women, secured, as he imagined, from the hatred which he perceived his subjects had against him.

He died in the year 837, and his son Popiel the Second, who was, if possible, more cruel than his father, succeeded him in the government: his uncles, under whose guardianship he was for several years, appeared to him to be so many dangerous rivals who were ready to dethrone him; and his wife, who was as wicked as he, but still more ambitious, proposed to him their destruction, as the only means he could take to fix the crown upon his head. Popiel consented to his wife's proposition, feigned himself to be dangerously ill, and under pretence of taking his last adieu of his uncles invited them to drink a poisonous

cup which he had prepared for them, which very soon produced the intended effect, as these princes died the same day; but Popiel, his wife, and all his children, perished soon after in a very unaccountable and extraordinary manner.

The death of Popiel left Poland in the greatest trouble and confusion: his father had introduced all kinds of vices, which the son cultivated and propagated to the utmost of his power; and his death was far from putting an end to them; for on one side, their intestine divisions invited their jealous neighbours to come and lay waste the kingdom, for which they were already making preparations; and on the other hand the lust of governing formed a thousand intrigues which threatened the state with a civil war, that was much more to be dreaded than the war which their natural enemies could make against them.

The proprietors of fiefs, from the authority with which they pretended to have been invested by those detestable monsters the Popiels, took every opportunity to oppress and to tyrannize over the people, in which they were joined by the Palatines; but the latter immediately took up arms, declared their freedom and their rights, declared the delegated authority of the Popiels to be null, and refused submission to the authority of the Palatines, who pretended to divide the government among themselves, and moreover declared that they would only obey one chief, who was elected by the unanimous voice of the people.

At this time, while the nation was assembled at Kruswick, a man whose name was Piaſt, an inhabitant of this town, concluding from the multitude of people who were there assembled, that unless some sudden measures were taken, a famine would ensue,

ensue, and a great part of them would die with hunger, opened his magazines, and supported the whole multitude for several days. This great act of humanity and disinterestedness fixed the eyes of all the people upon Piaſt; and as neither of the candidates could unite all the voices of the people in his favour, all the Palatines and proprietors of fiefs, chooſing rather to be governed by an inhabitant who was their inferior, than to ſee themſelves conſtrained to obey an equal, they propoſed Piaſt to be their king, and all the people conſented unaniouſly to the propoſition which the Palatines and proprietors had made; ſuppoſing that one of their countrymen who had ſo generouſly ſupported and ſaved them when they were ready to periſh with hunger, would govern them in affluence during his reign.

They were not deceived in their conjectures, for Piaſt was a great and a wiſe prince, who re-eſtabliſhed tranquillity in his kingdom, who ſuppreſſed the vexations of the people, and re-eſtabliſhed juſtice among all his ſubjects, and by a certain affability and good-nature, mixed with reſolution and firmneſs, brought all the orders of men in his ſtate to a proper and reaſonable ſubordination. In fact, Piaſt was loved and almoſt adored by all his ſubjects, and died univerſally regretted, with the reputation of being a good politician, and a king who gloried in being the firſt citizen of the ſtate.

He left his ſon Ziemovit upon the throne, whoſe reſolution and virtues conſoled in ſome meaſure the nation for the loſs which they had ſuſtained by the death of his father. He came to the crown in the year 861; before which æra the Poles had no knowledge of any regular laws, nor of any ſubordination in war: they aſſembled themſelves tumultuouſly together, marched on and attacked the enemy,

enemy, and if they were repulsed, they immediately betook themselves to flight, to return again as soon as they saw an opportunity of doing so; and when they found that their enemies gave them a warm reception, they retired again with the same precipitation as before: they continued attacking and retiring in this disorderly manner till they saw that they had gained the victory, or till they were entirely defeated.

Ziemovit not only formed some regular civil laws which were to be observed by all the people, but he taught them some military discipline; he regulated their attacks, and taught them to sustain the first efforts of the enemy; to resist in good order; to retire with precipitation when there was a necessity for doing so, but in such a manner that the enemy should take no advantage of their disorder; to rally in an instant; to push the enemy as much as possible after a victory; above all, to prepare resources after a defeat, and to prevent the enemy from prosecuting their advantages too far.

This great prince reigned thirty-one years, and left the crown to his son, who was the reverse of his father; a poor, abject, inactive wretch; and who might pass in a civil society as an insignificant individual, but upon the throne his weakness and poverty of understanding made him dangerous to a state where there were at this time but few laws and regulations, and where much depended upon the will of the sovereign; as he was not capable of distinguishing virtue from vice, nor of recompensing the one, or punishing the other.

He reigned twenty-one years in Poland, and left the crown to his son Ziemomislus, who reigned, or rather flumbered, upon

the throne, for a great number of years. He was one of those stupid inactive beings who injure a state more by their insensibility, than an active tyrant does by his severity. Happily for the Poles, the two preceding kings, Piaſt and his ſon, had brought the government into ſuch regularity and order, that the weakneſs of the following reigns did not occaſion ſuch diſorders and confuſion in the ſtate as might otherwiſe have been expected.

Ziemomiſlas lived in a torpid and lethargic ſtate till the year 964, and then left the crown, which, as in the Gothic governments, was now regarded as being in ſome meaſure hereditary in the royal family upon the throne, but ſtill liable on any extraordinary occaſion to be diſpoſed of ultimately by the unanimous voice of the people to his ſon Mieciflaw, who, according to the Poſiſh writers, was born blind; but when in the ſeventh year of his age they ordered his hair to be cut off, a ceremony then uſed in Poland, the young prince recovered his ſight, to the aſtoniſhment of the whole court: in all probability the fact was, that he had a very weak ſight, from an acrid humour which fell upon his eyes, or from the weakneſs of his nerves, which by cutting off his hair, and expoſing his head more to the cold air, was greatly ſtrengthened: however, their divines were conſulted upon this occaſion, and declared that this miracle clearly ſhewed that Mieciflaw would be the light of Poland.

When this prince came to the age of diſcretion, he ſhewed great talents; and through the interceſſion of his wife, the princeſs Dambrowcka, daughter of Boleſlas, duke of Bohemia, who would not accept his hand in marriage but on condition that he would

would renounce his Paganism, resolved to re-establish the Christian religion in Poland, upon the ruins of idolatry.

Before this æra the Poles, like all the other inhabitants of the earth, were plunged into the grossest idolatry: they adored Jupiter under the name of Jassem; Mars under that of Liada; Venus under that of Dzidzielia; Pluto, under the name of Niam, had a famous temple at Gnesna, which was the *sanctum sanctorum* of the whole country; Diana was called Driewanna; and Ceres Marzanna; Castor and Pollux were also in great veneration among these people, and were called Lel and Polel. The Poles have retained these two names even to this day, which they pronounce with a loud voice, and seem to invoke Castor and Pollux, as the gods of joy, whenever they are suddenly affected by any agreeable emotions of the soul.

In the months of March and of June the whole nation formed their assemblies called Stado, where, in the midst of their plays and of their dances, they advanced their pleasures to the greatest height.

For many centuries after Christianity was established in Poland, the country farmers assembled themselves together on certain days, and in the dances which they made between their young men and maids, with the continual clapping of hands, the air was pierced with the name of Liada, or Ladon, which was their invocation of the god Mars when they went to war. Besides the gods above named, they had another divinity whose whole occupation was to preside over the lives of mankind; this divinity was called Ziwic, and was in great veneration among all the people.

Miecislaw

Miecislaw was the first who was baptized in this country, when he repudiated seven wives whom he had married; and ordered that, on a day which he fixed, his subjects should destroy all their idols; from this famous day the Christian religion was received in the whole kingdom of Poland.

Soon after this Pope John the Thirteenth erected Gnesna and Cracow into archbishoprics, and through the intercession of the clergy Miecislaw richly founded the churches of those sees; ever since the affairs of the Christian church have been directed by the court of Rome; this has been the first and great object of their policy. The Poles submitted themselves with great resignation to the doctrines of the Christian church which were then established among them, notwithstanding the severe and unchristian laws which by the advice of the clergy were established in this kingdom: among other things it was ordered, that if any Pole was convicted of having eat flesh during Lent, he should have all his teeth drawn, except he could pay a very considerable sum of money in lieu of them.

Certainly the delivering a whole nation from a state of the grossest ignorance and idolatry, to the knowledge of the true God, was a very meritorious act; and if at this time they had been instructed in the pure faith and morality of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Poles would have had great reason to bless and venerate the instruments of their conversion; but unhappily for them, they were drawn out of their idolatry only to the observance of a set of frivolous and unmeaning ceremonies, which were performed by the most avaricious, bigotted, wicked, and debauched clergy that ever disgraced civil society, who were not content with usurping the greatest part of their property,

and laying them under punishments of their pretended canon laws, which are in many respects contrary to the laws of God and nature, but they were the means of fixing the greatest part of them in a state of the most abject slavery, from which they have never since been able to recover.

When the clergy read the gospel, they ordered that all the Poles who were present should immediately draw their sabres, as a testimony that they were always ready to defend the truth of the Christian religion at the price of their blood; this was afterwards published as a law, and remained in force for several centuries, and there are some old Poles who observe it even to this day.

In the year 967 the court of Rome erected the dukedom of Hungary into a kingdom; what power a Christian bishop could have to justify such a measure, we shall be at a loss to discover; Miecislaw demanded the same favour for his states, but he could not obtain it: the pope returned him for answer, that Christianity was not yet sufficiently established in his territories.

The following year two Saxon princes declared war against Miecislaw; and this prince attacked them upon the frontiers of his dominions, and gained such a complete victory over them, that very few of their army escaped; but their differences were soon after settled through the mediation of the emperor Otho the First.

In the year 1000 Miecislaw was again attacked by the Bohemians, notwithstanding the friendship which should have attached

tached these people to the Poles, since they were originally the same people. Silesia was then a province of Poland, which being the frontiers of the two states, became the theatre of the most bloody battles.

In the following year Miecislaw died, regretted by all his subjects, as he had employed his whole time to promote their happiness and welfare; and if the Romish clergy had been men of common honesty, who wished the happiness of their fellow-creatures, and who endeavoured to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ in the manner that he had ordered them to do it, the Poles to this day would have been wanting in gratitude if they did not venerate the name of Miecislaw as their great patron, and as the signal instrument which drew them out of darkness into light.

Boleslas, the son of Miecislaw, ascended the throne after the death of his father, and took every prudent measure which a prince of great talents could take to strengthen and aggrandize his people, and to govern them with justice and moderation. But the ideas which the Roman Catholic clergy had instilled into the people, that they must be passively obedient to all their dictates; that they must relinquish to them the greatest part of their property; that they must submit without any resistance to the orders of their civil governors, though ever so iniquitous and contrary to their original contract as members of society; and in fact, that they must give up all their liberties and privileges to their governors, and to the proprietors of their fiefs, many of which being at this time in the hands of the clergy, and all these under the pains and penalties of excommunication, and of eternal damnation. Hence the origin of that state of abject

slavery into which the greatest part of the inhabitants of Poland afterwards fell, and in which their descendents continue to this day. The Palatines and the proprietors of fiefs from this time usurped the principal rights and privileges of the people, to which the latter were forced to submit for the reasons before-mentioned.

The emperor Otho, hearing of the great acts of Boleslas, was greatly disquieted; and under pretence of visiting the tomb of St. Adalbert, set out for Gnesna, where the duke of Poland received him with great magnificence, which so flattered the emperor, that as a mark of his gratitude to Boleslas, he gave him the title of king, excepting for ever that homage and tribute which was due to the empire; and during the consecration placed the crown himself upon his head.

In the following year Boleslas published a law which ordered, that before his subjects gave battle to their enemies, they should sing a religious hymn: this is the most ancient written law that is at present known in Poland. There is great reason to think that the states of the kingdom had tacitly relinquished their liberties and privileges to the crown and to their Palatines, as it does not appear by the annals that there were any national assemblies or diets at this time, the king's orders and regulations being received universally as laws.

In the beginning of 1006, the duke of Bohemia having twice entered the Polish territories, and laid waste the country with fire and sword, Boleslas entered into Bohemia with a powerful army, and besieged the duke and his son in the fortress of Wessenzad, and obliged them to surrender themselves prisoners: Bohemia from this time became a province of the kingdom of Poland by right of conquest, as well as Moravia, which was conquered before, and
continued

continued so till Boleslas restored these provinces to Ulric the second son of the duke of Bohemia, on condition that he should become tributary to the kingdom and crown of Poland.

Towards the end of the following year the emperor Henry the Second, assisted with the forces of the empire, fearing the growing power of Poland, declared war against Boleslas, and advanced to attack him near the Sprehe, and with a design to pass that river. Boleslas waited for him on the other side, and as the detachments of Henry's army passed the river, they were surrounded and cut in pieces by the Poles, so that Henry despairing of success renounced his enterprize, and resolved to pass this river in a less dangerous place: he now turned his attention towards Silesia, and when he found an open country to bring all his forces into action, he obliged the Polish army to retire; and Boleslas, who found no other safety but in a flight, retired with a great part of his army, even to Posenania: harassed, and fearing to fall again into ambuscades in a country with which they were intirely unacquainted, the imperialists, during their march into Poland, murmured and threatened the emperor to retire; whereupon the fugitive Boleslas made some propositions of peace, of which the bishop of Magdebourg became the mediator: the principal of these articles were, that the king of Poland should restore Lusatia, and the town of Bautzen, and that he should renounce all his pretensions to Bohemia.

In the year 1009 Boleslas declared war against the Russians, and attempted to pass the river Bog; but as the Russian army were encamped on the other side of the river, and the Poles were afraid of entering the water, Boleslas was the first who threw himself into the river, and passed it by swimming, notwithstanding

standing all the resistance of the Russians; when his soldiers, surprized at his boldness and courage, followed him, and fell upon the Russians with such fury, that they immediately put them into disorder; however they soon rallied; but the more the victory was disputed, the more the Poles shewed their courage; so that at length the Russians were obliged to give way, and betake themselves to flight. The Poles now laid a great part of the Russian dominions under contribution; and afterwards laid siege to the famous town of Kiovia, of which they made themselves masters, and with it a considerable part of the treasures of the dukes of Russia: but the following year, the Russians having recovered their surprize, and rallied their forces, forced Boleslas to abandon all his conquests, after having lost a great number of men, and to retire on the other side of the Bog, where they again attacked him with all their forces: the battle was a very bloody one, and it was for some time uncertain on which side victory would declare, when Boleslas made a powerful effort and decided the day: the Russians gave way on every side, and were obliged to repass the river. Propositions of peace were now made on behalf of the Russians, which were accepted, and both armies retired to their respective habitations.

In the year 1013, Boleslas having been attacked by the Saxons during his expeditions into Russia, marched a great army into Saxony, and gained considerable advantages; whereupon the emperor, who dreaded the growing power of Boleslas, marched into ^{Silesia} ~~Siberia~~ with a very considerable army, and endeavoured to surprize the town of Glogaw; but the king of Poland threw himself into the town with his whole army, though much against the opinion of his principal officers, who regarded this

manœuvre

manœuvre as an act of cowardice, and who would have marched directly and attacked the enemy; but Boleslas, who waited for a re-inforcement, forbade any of his soldiers to go out of Glogaw on pain of death: "We will not brave the imperialists," says he, "we shall sufficiently mortify their presumptuous pride by destroying them, and for this purpose we have nothing more to do than assume courage enough to resist their attacks."

The event shews us that this king was an experienced and great general: the emperor, fatigued by the continual sallies of the Poles, who every day destroyed a great number of his men, and all the works which he had made to attack the town, renounced his project, and disbanded his army.

The following year Boleslas resolved to revenge himself for the injuries which he imagined he had received from the emperor, and sent his son Miecislaw to the duke of Bohemia, to engage him to join him: but the duke betrayed his friend and ally, and gave up his son to the emperor, and moreover carried his barbarity to such a height, as to massacre the principal persons who accompanied him. Astonished at this unworthy behaviour, Boleslas demanded his son of the emperor, who refused to give him up; but the archbishop of Magdebourg persuaded the chief of the empire to give up this prisoner as an act of policy, as well as of humanity: "By giving into the desires of a tender parent," said this prelate, "we shall disarm a dangerous enemy, but by retarding this matter, we shall not only exasperate Boleslas, but in the end make him attribute only to our fears, what he has a right to expect from our regards; besides, by giving up his son, we may oblige him by a formal

“mal treaty to grant us a peace, and to give us hostages for the
“performance of it.”

This wise advice proves how much the king of Poland was at that time dreaded in the empire. However the emperor did not follow the archbishop's counsel, but gave up Miecislaw without any condition, and even sent this prince into Poland with an escort suitable to his dignity, which had such an effect upon Boleslas, that he immediately listened to the terms of peace which were proposed, and did homage to the emperor for Silesia and part of Lusatia, which were then regarded as provinces of the empire.

In the year 1018 the Russians, who had now recovered from their former defeats, under the conduct of their duke Jaraslaw, attempted an invasion in Poland; the armies of the two nations met again upon the banks of the river Bog, and a bloody battle ensued; but the great experience as well as courage of Boleslas prevailed over the rashness and imprudent valour of Jaraslaw. Boleslas gained a considerable tract of country by this battle, and the Russians were moreover obliged to pay him a tribute.

After this Boleslas lived in peace all the rest of his days; his subjects obeyed him without murmuring, and almost idolized his great talents and courage, and he died in the year 1024, regretted by all his people, and was buried in the cathedral of Posenania.

Miecislaw succeeded his father with the title of Miecislaw the Second, and was crowned at Gnesna in the year 1025. Master of a state already powerful, and of subjects accustomed to victory
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and to obedience, this prince relaxed the reins of government and became very indolent, reposing himself in the arms of a voluptuous woman; but his indolence was the cause of more troubles to his subjects than the active virtues of his father had procured them glory and prosperity.

As soon as the Russians heard the character of Miecislav they immediately took up arms, and fell upon the Polish garrisons which were in their country with great fury, part of whom they massacred, the rest they sent to cultivate the lands which Boleslas had laid waste. Miecislav though he had made war was no warrior, so that this revolt was not sufficient to draw him out of his lethargy before his people began to murmur against him; then he assembled an army, and shewed himself before the enemy, whom the Poles attacked with great fury and put them to flight; but this prince, content with having gained a victory, soon after abandoned a large tract of country to them which this victory had procured him.

In the year 1028 Predislas, the son of the duke of Bohemia, natural enemy of the Poles, entered Moravia, a province allied to Poland, with a powerful army, when the Moravians joined the Bohemians, and soon cleared the country of all the Polish garrisons. So many misfortunes at last forced Miecislav to take up arms, and he ordered all his vassals to follow him.

This is the first time that we find the feudal military establishment carried to its greatest height in Poland: it now appears by their annals that the inhabitants held their lands by military tenures, and that the proprietors of fiefs obliged themselves to assist the crown with a certain number of men whenever they were called

upon; but the Poles had not, even at this time, any idea of that abject slavery under which the greatest part of the nation labour at present, and into which they were insensibly drawn by the wicked and artful machinations of the clergy.

But to return to my subject: Miecislav led an army of Poles into Moravia, and after having laid waste the country of those who were concerned in the rebellion against him, returned into Poland, without making any other effort to recover the territories which had thrown off all dependence upon his crown. Scarcely was Miecislav arrived in his kingdom before he was informed, that the governors which his father had placed in those parts of Lower Saxony and in Pomerania, which he had conquered, had revolted from his obedience, and with the succours of the emperor Conrad the Second, had assumed a sovereign authority to themselves: it was from this revolution, according to the Polish annals, that the dukedoms of Mecklenbourg and Pomerania were formed: pressed by his subjects, Miecislav immediately led a great army into Pomerania, and gained a memorable battle over these people; but instead of endeavouring to reap the fruits of his victory, and to reduce these rebellious chiefs to their duty, this prince returned to Cracow, where, worn out by his debauched course of life, he fell into a state of languor and died, leaving his queen Richsa, who was daughter of Eronfoy, count palatine of the Rhine, regent of the kingdom, and guardian of the young prince Casimir his son.

This princess took the reins of government in the year 1034, and according to the Polish writers governed with great severity; the taxes were considerably augmented, and levied with the utmost barbarity, the impossibility of paying them being deemed

an unpardonable crime. The Poles were dismissed from the principal employments of the state, which were given to Germans; the nation murmured, and made representations, but were not heard; whereupon the Palatines and the proprietors of fiefs joined menaces to their remonstrances, and the common people, always ready to join the standard of those who shall undertake to protect the liberties of the public, appeared ready to follow the first who should declare openly against the government.

In the midst of these commotions, the Germans, fearing that they should be the first victims that were sacrificed to the indignation of the Poles, quitted the kingdom with great precipitation, and pressed the queen Richsa to take care of her own person as well as that of her son. The queen followed their advice, and retired to the court of the emperor Conrad the Second, with all the treasures that she could seize; but she would not keep her son near her, fearing some surprize, but sent him secretly to Paris to finish his education. The flight of the queen and of her son augmented the troubles of Poland: under her government the laws and the orders of the sovereign power had been made use of as a cloak for all kinds of rapine and plunder; after her departure even this pretext was laid aside, and the strongest and most powerful persons knew no other judge but their swords. The Palatines and the proprietors of fiefs acted the part of tyrants on every side, in which they were joined by the clergy, who, to secure the great property which they had unjustly usurped, entered into all the schemes of the nobility to oppress and trample under foot the rights and privileges of the people and to render themselves independent. But they very soon became jealous of each other, made war among themselves, and desolated the country:

the towns were destroyed, the country plundered, and the fruits of the earth burnt.

Whenever a nation is torn to pieces by a civil war, she awakens all the wars and disputes which she has had with her neighbours. Prediflas, duke of Bohemia, entered Silesia with a powerful army, made himself master of Breslaw, penetrated into Poland, burnt Posenania, and laid siege to Gnesna. Prediflas entered into this war with a more savage cruelty than was ever exercised by the Tartars or the Calmouks, yet the Romish clergy persuaded this man that he was a good Christian and very devout; they even made him demand the body of St. Adalbert of the inhabitants of Gnesna, which they persuaded him to make the protector of his states. The Poles seeing the barbarity of this monster, who neither spared age nor sex, refused to comply with his demands; whereupon he ordered his soldiers, as soon as they entered the town, to carry off the body, but the common people regarding this action as a kind of profanation refused it, and their refusal was looked upon as a miracle. The bishop of Prague believed it too, and attributed it to the sins of the people; and in consequence of it, this pious prelate appointed three days of prayer, during which they were to fast in the camp, to obtain the power of God to seize this precious relick; but the inhabitants of Gnesna took this opportunity to hide the body of their martyr, and to substitute another in its place. Prediflas carried this body into Bohemia, and they are still persuaded at Prague that they possess the real body of this saint; but this pretended fasting and devotion did not hinder the Bohemians from robbing the town, and even the churches, and from massacring great numbers of the inhabitants of both sexes; such was the use that was made of religion and of things sacred in these days.

The

The Polish nation continued in this deplorable situation till the year 1040, when they seemed to recover themselves from the phrensy which for some years had disordered their senses, and, like a man who had been in this dreadful condition, they began to reflect upon the horrors and excesses which they had incurred. The clergy and the nobles, who had some time before declared themselves independent, seeing the people in the greatest misery, and what affected them much more, seeing all their neighbours their enemies, and ready to wrest from their hands that power which they had usurped, and which they were not from their divisions in a situation to support, began to think of taking some measures for their own security.

The archbishop of Gnesna, primate of the kingdom, convoked an assembly of the states, and proposed to them to recal the heir of the crown, as the only means to give some stability to the government, to quell their divisions, and to secure them in the rights and privileges which they had usurped: “The laws and
“ customs of the kingdom demand it, says this prelate; the
“ throne is his, and we cannot refuse it him without injustice.
“ The nation is his guardian, and can she then abandon her
“ ward to the hazards of an obscure life, unworthy of his birth
“ and of his rank? His misfortunes ought to make him more
“ dear to his subjects; and there is great reason to think
“ that the humiliation of a private life will inspire him with
“ very different sentiments from those which we once feared he
“ would adopt.”

One would have imagined that a prelate, who was only capable of thinking now and then in this just mode, should have reflected at the same time, that as he wished to receive justice and benevo-
lence.

lence from the king, he, the rest of his brethren, and the nobility were equally obliged to shew the same to the rest of their fellow-subjects; but it appears that this was too interesting a matter for the primate's serious contemplation. However the assembly agreed to recal Casimir; but they were ignorant of the retreat of their young king, and were obliged to have recourse to Richsa, who, vanquished by their importunity, discovered that he was in France. Casimir had studied there some time, and afterwards passed into Italy, where the Romish clergy persuaded him to become a Monk; so that upon his return again into France, this young prince was entered into the abbey of Cluni, and had really gone into orders. Casimir was extremely surprized when the Polish ministers presented themselves before him and laid open the object of their mission: it was not in his power to accept their offers; for when he renounced the world, and became a Monk, he had disqualified himself for wearing the crown. The pope alone was supposed to have the power to dissolve the religious engagements of this young prince, and therefore it was absolutely necessary to have recourse to him for this purpose. The pope and the court of Rome, who had now most wickedly made the Christian religion subservient to their private interest, made some difficulties in complying with this proposal, only on condition that the Polish nation should oblige themselves to pay a considerable sum of money annually to the holy see for the support of a lamp in the church of St. Peter at Rome, which was to be called St. Peter's pence; that the whole nation should oblige themselves to wear their hair in future cut in the form of the crown of a Monk; and that at all great feasts, during the mass, the nobles should wear to their collar a star formed of linen.

Casimir

Casimir was received into his states with great demonstrations of joy by all ranks of people; who immediately after his coronation applied himself to quell the troubles of the kingdom; and as the clergy had been the chief instruments of bringing about his recal and advancement to the throne, he confirmed to them all the rights and privileges which they had so wickedly usurped during the late troubles, and which, by means of their spiritual censures and the thunders of the Vatican, they now thought themselves in a situation to support, even against all the rest of the nation.

To prevent himself from being molested by Russia, Casimir demanded the sister of their duke Jaraslaw in marriage; the Russians, now desirous of tranquillity as well as the Poles, seized this opportunity to restore a lasting peace between the two nations: however, such was the superstition and bigotry of these times, this alliance with a princess of the Greek religion occasioned great murmuring among the Polish clergy; but their clamours ceased when, before the ceremony of the marriage, they again baptized their future queen, fearing that the Russians, as they observed, who were still ignorant and brutal, had omitted some essential point in the baptism which they had administered.

During the interregnum several Polish lords and the proprietors of the great fiefs, as I have already observed, had declared themselves independent, and had actually formed sovereign principalities in the heart of the kingdom. One of those lords, who was possessed of a large fief, took this opportunity, with the assistance of his vassals, to seize upon all that tract of country between the Vistula, the Narew, and the Bog; which district
is:

is at present called the palatinate of Mazovia, from Masos, the name of this lord, who was greatly chagrined when he saw Casimir enter the kingdom. Several of the proprietors of the lesser fiefs relinquished the power which they had illegally acquired during the interregnum; but Masos took every measure to support himself in his usurpation: he entered into a treaty with the inhabitants of Prussia, and led a considerable army of those people into Poland, who were soon put to flight; but Masos made a second attempt to support himself by force of arms, and was now defeated entirely, so that the few who escaped were obliged to hide themselves in the forests: Masos followed them thither with an intent to excite them to make some new efforts; but the Prussians, chagrined at their great losses, which they attributed to the bad counsels of Masos, to revenge themselves hung him upon a gibbet; upon which all the inhabitants of this tract of country returned again under the dominion of the crown of Poland, and the Prussians offered to pay the Poles a tribute.

The following year (1044) the Poles were likewise amply revenged for the depredations and barbarities which the Bohemians had made in their kingdom. The emperor Henry the Third, at the instigation of Richsa, attacked Predisslas with a part of the forces of the empire, and forced this duke to restore to Poland all the places which he had usurped, and moreover to pay fifty marks of gold and 2000 marks of silver for the expences of the war. It is true, the king of Poland, as prince of Silesia, was also a prince of the empire; and the emperor, as guardian of the rights of the princes of the empire, was obliged to assist him with the forces of the empire.

Casimir,

Casimir, now delivered from all his foreign enemies, applied himself to reform in some measure the manners of the people; but at the same time to rivet the chains of slavery, which the clergy had long before prepared for them: he founded two new monasteries, one at Tiniec upon the Vistula, and the other at Leubus in Silesia; he granted many new rights and privileges to the clergy, and, through their intercession, to several of the great lords; so that what they could not before obtain by force and violence, they now acquired by intrigue and purchased by money.

The clergy, perceiving this king to be naturally disposed to piety and to favour religious houses, took advantage of his good disposition, and extorted several concessions from him which he had no right as a limited sovereign to grant, nor they as subjects to receive, as will be seen by several of the laws and orders which he published in the latter part of his reign: but this was the general character of the Romish clergy throughout all Europe; they took the advantage of weak and pious princes to enslave and oppress their fellow-subjects, to deprive them of their natural rights and privileges, and to treat them as a race of beings of an inferior nature; they made every thing subservient to their pride, avarice, and ambition; rejecting the true precepts of the Christian religion for ostentatious ceremonies and superstitious fables.

Casimir died in the year 1058, much esteemed and regretted by the Poles: he was pious, and he re-established peace and tranquillity in his states, which were absolutely necessary for a country which had been almost destroyed by intestine wars and divisions.

After the death of this prince, Boleslas his son was called to the throne by the general desire of the whole nation, though he was only sixteen years of age. All their neighbours were much surprized that the Poles should make such a choice, considering the troubles which they had suffered during the minority of his father; but Boleslas soon convinced them, that though he was young in years, he had talents to direct properly the ardour and vivacity of his youth: like Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, he shewed an early desire for war, which he conducted with no less prudence than courage. Soon after he came to the throne the duke of Bohemia, who thought to take advantage of this prince's youth and inexperience, attacked the frontiers of Poland; Boleslas immediately marched against him, and surprized him in the narrow passes of a forest, so that he was surrounded by the army of Boleslas, and could not even make an honourable retreat. In this situation he demanded peace of the king of Poland, but his propositions were rejected. Reduced to this extremity, the duke of Bohemia resolved to take a desperate step: if he was discovered, he had prepared every thing to cut his way through the enemy's army or to perish; if he was not, he was sure of drawing his troops out of the disagreeable situation into which his imprudence had precipitated them. He kindled several great fires in every part of his camp to make the Poles believe that he was preparing something extraordinary to attack them the next day, and under cover of the darkness of the night his troops defiled through narrow passes in the woods, which he had reconnoitred the preceding day, and fearing that they should be pursued, they cut down trees, and took every possible means to obstruct these passes and to retard the pursuit of their enemies. At break of day the Bohemians had retreated to some distance, and were in a place of security. In vain did Boleslas,

Boleslas, who intended in the morning to attack his enemies, attempt to pursue them ; he was stopped every where by trees across the avenues, and at length obliged to retire, fearing to be drawn into the same disagreeable situation wherein the duke of Bohemia was entangled the preceding day. The following year however, the king of Poland, seeing that he had new enemies to contend with, made an honourable and a lasting peace with the Bohemians.

The Prussians had for some years made several attacks upon the frontiers of Poland and carried off a great deal of plunder, which they deposited in the fortress of Gaudentz, built in a situation almost inaccessible upon the Vistula : Boleslas attempted to lay siege to this fortress and nest of robbers, but finding that it was impossible for him to succeed, he made a feint as if he would retire, and broke down all the bridges which were behind him, as if he was afraid to be molested in his retreat. Scarcely had he left his camp, when the Prussians, as he foresaw would be the case, prepared to pursue him, and spread themselves through the country in search of new plunder ; whereupon Boleslas returned upon them all on a sudden, passed the river by swimming, and attacked their separate detachments with such fury, that victory immediately declared in his favour upon every attack ; all the plunder of those robbers was retaken, and all the inhabitants of Prussia, now vanquished and discouraged, were forced to return under the dominion of Poland.

The following year Boleslas led his victorious army against the Hungarians, and gained a considerable battle over them. The prince Andrew, who had usurped the crown of Hungary, was obliged to fly, and was afterwards killed by his own people in

a forest; and Bela his brother, who had demanded the assistance of the Poles to recover his right, was thereupon conducted to the royal palace, where he was elected king of Hungary in the most solemn manner by the states of this kingdom.

Boleslas had some pretensions to the throne of Russia, which he resolved sooner or later to assert; and in order to pave the way to it, and to prepare in some measure the minds of the people for such a change, he chose a wife among the Russians; and no sooner were the marriage ceremonies past than he led an army into this country under pretence of supporting the interests of Izaflaw, prince of Russia, who had been driven out of the kingdom by his brother, and was come to demand assistance of the Poles. “The succours that I shall give him, said Boleslas, I owe to the sentiments of humanity, and I cannot refuse them. An unfortunate prince is more to be pitied than a common individual. If it is necessary that mankind should suffer afflictions in this world, those should be exempt from them who are established to make others happy.”

When we reflect a moment upon the ideas of this king, and upon his conduct, which will be hereafter more fully explained, it will afford an example of the pride, and at the same time depravity of human nature, which is scarcely to be equalled in the annals of history. Boleslas thought that princes were established to make others happy; and though they oppressed, robbed, and massacred them with impunity, which he afterwards did his subjects, it was all for their good: his clergy taught him, that he was a being of a superior order; that he was the representative of the Divinity upon earth; and that even to oppose his will was to incur eternal damnation: how he conducted himself

himself in consequence of these religious principles I shall now proceed to explain.

As soon as he entered Russia with these pretended views of humanity, he met the Russian army near Kiovia under the command of the duke Poloczko, brother of Izaflaw, who, surprized at the firm and undaunted countenance of the Poles, was seized with fear and left his camp; but, ashamed of his cowardice, he immediately returned, and beheld his enemies a second time, when his fear increased to such a degree, that he could no longer withstand it, and setting spurs to his horse, he made the best of his way across the forests, and hid himself. The Russians, deserted by their general, followed his example, and disbanded themselves; so that very soon, in the place of an army which the Poles were preparing to fight, they saw nothing before them but a naked camp and a vast desert. Kiovia was now besieged, and soon after taken; and Boleslas, who pretended to be the protector of the prince of Russia, soon became more master than he in his proper territories, and lived there in a degree of voluptuousness that was not to be equalled in those days, and his example was followed by all his army.

Boleslas was six years in conquering Russia, though he employed a very considerable army for that purpose; but this interval occasioned a strange revolution in Poland: all the young men who were capable of bearing arms were drawn off into Russia, so that the kingdom was only peopled by old men, women, children, and slaves; but many of the boys had grown up during this interval and become men. When the women heard that their husbands were living familiarly with the Russian women, and had no idea of returning into their own country, they

they were filled with rage, and resolved to revenge themselves, and repay their husbands in the same species of commerce. Every Polish woman therefore chose her companion; and as there were fewer young men than women, those who were not supplied made the most shameful advances to their slaves, and as the whole nation fell into the same kind of dishonourable licentiousness, one was not in the situation to reproach another.

When the news of what was passing in Poland reached the ears of Boleslas's soldiers in Russia, the whole army was filled with the greatest rage, as there were very few who had not wives or daughters in the general confederacy, and demanded their return into their respective provinces. The king neither rejected nor granted their request, but endeavoured to calm and console them, in hopes that the war would soon be finished. Impatient to return into their own country, the Poles deserted by companies and even by regiments, so that Boleslas's army was very soon reduced to one third part of what it was; and, in fact, there remained very few with him but those who did not choose to quit their debauched course of life, and those who having no fixed and solid establishment in Poland, chose rather to quit their own country than to return there again to partake of the shame of their unfaithful wives. Those who were the most violent, and who deserted their colours, were the least scrupulous, for as soon as they arrived in their own respective provinces they retook their wives, and forgot all their faults.

Boleslas, who was forced to abandon Russia, soon after followed them into Poland, and now gave a loose to his barbarous disposition. He immediately hanged up all who were rich and powerful among the deserters, and confiscated all their property:

their wives, who were the authors of these disorders, likewise felt the weight of his vengeance; he ordered the children which they were nourishing to be torn from their breasts, and to be thrown into the midst of the forests to become the prey of the wild beasts, and condemned the guilty mothers to give suck to young dogs; and ordered, under pain of sharing the fate of their husbands, that none of them should appear in public without these animals hanging to their breasts.

These acts, which were a mixture of cruelty and ridicule, were the forerunners of all those cruelties and barbarities which a mind that abhors itself and endeavours to fly from its own reflections, is capable of falling into: Boleſlas soon forgot that he was a king, and his clergy had some time before made him forget that he was a human being. His courtiers, who were more attached to his fortune than to laws and good order, were the principal ministers of his capriciousness and fury. The bishop of Cracow was the only person who dared oppose the tyranny of the prince, which put Boleſlas into such a fury, that he ran into the church where the bishop was celebrating the mass, and, as his guards refused to execute his orders, he assassinated the bishop himself upon the steps of the altar.

The pious representations of the bishop had thrown the king into the greatest fury; who, after having been taught by the clergy that he was accountable only to God for his actions, regarded the representations of the bishop as so many insults; whereupon the latter excommunicated him, and fell a sacrifice to his vengeance.

Pope

Pope Gregory the Seventh, hearing of all these disorders, excommunicated Boleslas, deposed him, laid the kingdom under an interdiction, and absolved his subjects from their oath of fidelity. While Boleslas was massacring his subjects, and committing such barbarities as the most abandoned tyrants would have been almost deterred from doing, this very religious pope, who called himself the father of the Christians, gave himself very little concern about it; but as soon as he touched the church, the thunders of the Vatican were heard over the whole kingdom, as if the life of one churchman was of more consequence than the lives of some thousands of innocent persons and children, whom this monster had destroyed with impunity, and as an act for which he was only accountable to God. As soon as the bull of excommunication was published in Poland the clergy began to shew themselves, and to thunder forth the heinousness of the crime which Boleslas had committed, so that this prince soon became the horror of the whole nation, and fearing every moment that he should be massacred, he saved himself in Hungary; but not believing himself secure even in this kingdom, he took refuge in the monastery of Carinthia. Such was the Christian religion in those days, and such the wickedness and partiality of those who called themselves its guardians and protectors.

When Boleslas had abdicated the government, Uladislas, the son of his younger brother Casimir, was chosen to succeed him; but this prince seemed to be better calculated by nature for a private life, than for a throne: he held the reins of government very timidly for fear of displeasing the all-powerful court of Rome, whose thunders made all Europe to tremble: he relinquished

quished the title of king, and took the modest title of duke of Poland, because the Pope had forbidden all the Polish bishops to crown any king in future without the consent of him or of his successors: such was the pride and insolence of the popes, and of the court of Rome in those days, who deemed their power greater than ever was that of Cæsar, who thought their dictates were infallible, and who regarded all the empires and kingdoms of the Christian world as fiefs of the Tiara. All kinds of divine service were suspended in Poland for one year and half, and some hundreds of thousands of innocent Christians were punished because one monster, who was their governor, had offended. However during the following year 1083, at the intercession of the other Christian powers, the pope removed the interdiction which had been laid upon Poland, and as a mark of his great bounty granted a power to the king and to his subjects to open their churches again, and to have the divine service administered there as before.

At the desire of the Poles, who feared that Boleslas would return again into that kingdom, Uladislas married the princess Judith, grand-daughter of Andrew king of Hungary, but this princess had never any children, and died three years after much regretted by all the Polish nation.

When Boleslas fled into Hungary, he was followed by his young son called Miecislaw, whom he left at this court when he quitted it to hide himself. Uladislas, when he mounted the throne, brought his nephew back to Poland, and treated him with such apparent good-nature and friendship, that when the sterility of his wife was declared, and her sudden death destroyed all his hopes of having legitimate children, the nation habituated

themselves to regard Miecislaw as the presumptive heir of the crown. The good quality of this young prince gained him the general love of all the Polish nation: Uladislas appeared to be highly pleased with it, and to satisfy the desires of the people married him to Eudoxia, daughter of Suantopelek duke of Kiovia: but the joy which this alliance gave to all ranks of people, was soon changed into melancholy. Miecislaw was poisoned and died, and in vain did this pious duke Uladislas, this favourite of Rome, attempt to exculpate himself from being the author of this infamous transaction; it was soon discovered that it was a measure of his contrivance to bring his natural sons to the throne.

In the year 1092 the Russians revolted, massacred all the Polish troops which remained in their territories, and made themselves masters of all the fortresses which had been held by the enemy; the news of this revolt likewise awakened the courage and ferocity of the Prussians, and of the inhabitants of Pomerania: the Poles, fearing more the barbarous fury of the latter than of the former, led all their forces against them; the two armies came in sight of each other on the fifteenth of August, one of the days which is celebrated in the Romish church in honour of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ; whereupon Uladislas, fearing to give offence to the court of Rome, wished to defer the battle till the next day. This very pious prince, who easily got absolution for poisoning his nephew, thought he should commit a mortal sin by defending his people against barbarians on a day which the clergy had set apart for prayer: nevertheless, notwithstanding all his precaution, the two armies engaged, and by the bravery and good conduct of the Palatine of Cracow the Poles gained the victory; but by
the

the shameful conduct of that infamous hypocrite Uladislas they were soon after obliged to relinquish all the advantages which they had gained, and to retire into their own country; as the Bohemians, who would take advantage of the difficulties wherein the war with the Prussians and Pomeranians had thrown the Polish nation, had made an invasion in Siberia. Uladislas, to revenge himself of those people who were always the natural enemies of the Poles, ordered the Palatine of Cracow, who was likewise the great general of the crown, to enter Moravia with an army, and to lay waste the country with fire and sword; whereupon, as the Polish historians pretend, Boleslas, a natural son of Uladislas, who was now only ten years of age, and who hearkened with a particular attention to the orders which his father gave to the general of the crown, threw himself at the feet of Uladislas, and earnestly desired him that he might be permitted to make the campaign with the army, which was immediately granted him; and it is asserted that this young prince shewed a genius and a taste for war, which was tempered with such manly reflections, as were very uncommon in those days.

While the Poles were laying waste Moravia, the Pomeranians besieged and took the castle of Miedzyrzecz, upon the frontiers of Great Poland; and from thence they sent out detachments which destroyed all the country round. Boleslas desired to attack those robbers under the conduct of the crown general before-mentioned; they invested the castle; but as the ground about it was wet and marshy, and after any considerable fall of rain covered with water, it is said that all the officers despaired of the success of this enterprize, and were about to abandon it, except the young prince who opposed it, and who made himself be

heard by the troops, notwithstanding the resistance of the general. The winter was approaching, and he with great reason and reflection asserted that a strong frost would make the approaches to the fort extremely easy; orders were therefore given that the soldiers should construct barracks for themselves, and that the camp should be fortified with the greatest care; and in this situation they resolved to brave all the rigour of the season. Surprized at these preparations, the Pomeranians, fearing the want of provisions, and despairing of being succoured, demanded to capitulate, and obtained the liberty to return into their own country.

The year 1097 produced a remarkable change in the Polish government; this is the year in which the kingdom was first divided into separate governments; and this æra is so much the more remarkable in the history of the kingdom, and worthy of our attention, as this division has been one of the great causes of all the troubles which have since overwhelmed this unhappy state, and the principal cause of the weak situation in which it is at this time.

Uladiflas had a natural son called Sbignee, who being persecuted by the crown-general was revolted, and after that, by the intrigues of some of the courtiers, was pardoned, and commanded the Polish army conjointly with his younger brother Boleflas. This regulation was the cause of much disputes and troubles in Poland: the two brothers became jealous of each other; and the indolent and dastardly Uladiflas, to destroy the first seeds of their hatred, promised to divide the government between them after his death; and that Boleflas should have Silesia, and the provinces of Cracovia, of Sendomir, and of Si-

radia;

radia ; while that part of Pomerania which he held from his ancestors, together with the Palatinates of Lencici, and those of Cujavia and Mazovia, should be governed by Sbignee. But this wretched politician, instead of accommodating the differences between his sons, rather increased them ; the division which he had made of his territories between his children, and which, by the by, he had no right to make, augmented the desire which they had to reign : they hated the general of the crown, and the war which he had advised against the Bohemians served as a pretence for their rebellion. Each of them commanded a little army, but they now united their forces, and seized upon the provinces which they were only appointed to govern after the death of their father ; afterwards they marched their joint forces against the general of the crown, and besieged him in a fortress where he was retired. Frighted and intimidated by these manœuvres of his sons, Uladislas imagined that they wanted to deprive him of the little which remained in his power, and therefore he put himself under the protection of the general of the crown ; but when the princes arrived with their army to besiege the fortress, they declared that they only pursued the general ; and Uladislas, to pacify them and to obtain peace, was obliged to order this general into perpetual exile.

The young Boleslas having given such distinguishing marks of his valour and military talents, his father appointed him to command the army alone, though he was so young ; but he soon after convinced his countrymen that he was worthy of that command.

The Pomeranians, seeing the Poles thus divided among themselves, entered the kingdom with a great army ; Boleslas immediately

diately assembled his troops, and by forced marches, through by-roads, surprized the enemy, intirely defeated them, and returned to court with some thousands of prisoners.

Two years after, in the year 1102, Uladislas died in an advanced age, and Boleslas was declared duke of Poland, and soon after, at the desire of his subjects, he married the princess Zbislava, daughter of the duke of Kiovia: but scarcely was the marriage ceremony performed, when he was informed of the revolt of his brother Sbignee, who, in concert with the duke of Bohemia, prepared to attack Silesia. Boleslas would have put himself at the head of his army, but his council pressed him not to leave the centre of his dominions where every thing was in such confusion, and therefore he sent the count Zeliskaw to lay waste Moravia with fire and sword. Zeliskaw met the army of the duke of Bohemia in this country, but found some difficulty to engage them to fight; they were afraid of the Poles; nevertheless as he retired they attacked his rear-guard, and soon after the action became general, and was bloody, but neither party could attribute the victory to themselves, and their differences were decided the following year by a pacification.

Boleslas now turned his arms towards Pomerania, and invested the strong town of Belgard: two heralds, whom he sent to the inhabitants to summons them to surrender, were introduced into the town, and received with the greatest contempt. They presented two shields, the one red and the other white, as the emblems of peace or of war, which the duke of Poland offered to the inhabitants of Pomerania. "Depart immediately," said one of the chiefs of the city to the heralds, "depart quickly out of our territories, we will keep your two shields; we are de-
" fious

“furious of peace, but we will not have it till we have embrued
“our hands in the blood of those who would make us slaves.”

This haughty answer irritated Boleslas to the last degree; he prepared to attack them; and at the same time that he made a false attack upon the ramparts, which drew the attention of the enemy, he put himself at the head of a great body of troops, and attacked the other side of the town, which was soon carried by assault, and pillaged, when the Pomeranians submitted, and desired peace.

Sbignee had frequently revolted against his brother; he was not at all satisfied with the provinces which his father had allotted him, and had joined himself with the enemies of Poland, with a design to dethrone Boleslas, who had punished him, and deprived him of the greatest part of his territories, leaving him only the province of Mazovia; but such was the turbulent disposition of Sbignee, that Boleslas was soon after forced to seize upon all the rest of his territories, and to banish him out of the kingdom.

The following year 1108, while Boleslas laid siege to Wollin, a considerable body of Pomeranians attacked his camp during the night, but they were soon repelled and put to flight. Among the prisoners whom the Poles took in this action, there was one who refused to take off the mask of his helmet; whereupon he was conducted to the duke, who immediately knew him to be his brother Sbignee. The council of war condemned him to die, and the foldiers were ready to execute him upon the spot, but Boleslas pardoned him, and forbid him ever to enter Poland.

Poland again, except he wished to be treated in the most ignominious manner.

The following year the emperor Henry the Fifth formed the project to subdue Poland; and with the assistance of the Bohemians, the Bavarians, and the Saxons, he entered Silesia, and laid siege to Glogaw: the besieged defended themselves with great courage; but seeing their walls ready to fall, they demanded a suspension of arms, and offered to surrender themselves if they were not succoured by Boleslas in five days. The emperor demanded hostages for the fulfilling their promises, and the principal persons of the town sent him the youngest of their children. The duke of Poland advanced by forced marches to succour Glogaw; and when he was informed of this convention, he sent an express to tell the inhabitants that he was using his utmost endeavours to deliver them, and desired that they would use every possible means to hold out for a few days. On receiving this advice, the inhabitants of Glogaw made new entrenchments behind the breaches, raised new walls, and prepared to defend themselves to the last extremity. When the fifth day arrived, and Boleslas did not appear, the emperor sent a detachment to take possession of the town; but they were received with a cloud of darts and arrows. Enraged at this deceit, Henry advanced with his whole army, and ordered a general assault; and to be sure of the success of it, and as well to abate the courage of the besieged, he ordered all the young hostages which he had received to be placed in the front of his different detachments: but this unworthy action, so far from diminishing the ardour and fury of the besieged, served only to increase it. Clouds of arrows and darts flew from all parts, and many of the hostages were pierced by them; but this melancholy sight served only to redouble

redouble the ardour and fury of those who fought upon the ramparts, and made them the more eager to direct every arrow into the breast of a German. The emperor lost a great number of men in this attack, and perceiving that he gained no ground, resolved to retreat, which he did with great precipitation; but before he was one league from Glogaw, Boleslas appeared with his whole army, and as he could not bring Henry to accept the reasonable propositions of peace which he made him, he attacked and gained a complete victory over him.

The Poles now carried the war into Bohemia, but when they were ready to pass through a narrow defile in the mountains between Silesia and Bohemia, the enemy appeared to oppose them, and posted themselves on the sides of the mountain, so as to command the passage; whereupon Boleslas drew up his troops almost in the form of a square battalion, making a front on each side, and after having placed all his baggage, sick, and prisoners in the centre, he marched on with a determined countenance, as if he defied the Bohemians: nevertheless the Poles were not without fear when they saw themselves in this dangerous situation. A Bohemian soldier came forward from his ranks, and like Goliath offered to fight singly any man in the Polish army. Mortified that none of his men would accept this defiance, Boleslas advanced himself, and after parrying with skill his adversary's attacks, he laid this champion dead upon the spot. This gallant action of Boleslas revived the courage of the Poles, who immediately fell upon their enemies with great fury, and gained a complete victory over them, which was soon after followed by a peace.

Three years afterwards, in the year 1120, the people of that part of Pomerania of which Boleslas had made a conquest, were

converted to Christianity. Otto, bishop of Bamberg, took great pains to preach the gospel in this province, and by his virtuous example, as well as by his doctrines, soon brought the principal part of the people of the province to embrace the Christian religion; a very extraordinary example in these times, when all the bishops and the greatest part of the clergy were plunged in a state of luxury, idleness, and ignorance, and abandoned their sacred functions to the Monks, whose wicked and disorderly conduct was more likely to give scandal to idolatry, than to convert them to the Christian faith.

Scarcely had Boleslas drawn himself out of one war, but he was attacked on the other side, and obliged to defend himself alternately against the Bohemians, the Prussians, the Hungarians, and the Russians: the fatigues of these wars shortened his days; he died in the year 1139; his body was quite exhausted, but his mind was as active as ever; he was universally regretted by all the Polish nation; he was humane, good-natured, and affable, and at the same time an intrepid warrior, and a prudent general. During the course of his reign he gained forty-seven battles, which acquired him immortal glory, and the esteem of all the neighbouring nations: he respected the laws and customs of his country, and by his own example taught his subjects to submit themselves to them without murmuring.

Boleslas left four sons who were already grown up, and a fifth called Casimir, was still in the cradle; and though he had seen the troubles with which the kingdom had been afflicted by his father's bad policy in dividing his states, yet he acted still more imprudently, and divided his dominions into four governments: he gave to Uladislas the eldest the provinces of Cracovia,
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of Siradia, of Lencici, of Silesia, and of Pomerania : he gave to Boleslas his second son the province of Mazovia and of Cujavia, together with the districts of Dobizin and of Culm ; to Miecislaw his third son the districts of Gnesna and of Calisch, with Posenania ; and to Henry his fourth son the provinces of Sendomir and of Lublin. When he was asked what he intended to give to his youngest son Casimir ? he answered by observing, “ That there were only four wheels to a chariot, and that these “ are of no other use than to support the body of the carriage, “ which is the most necessary part : therefore,” says he, “ the “ four children among whom I have divided my states, must be “ the support of him whom you think I have abandoned.” One would have imagined that Boleslas had a prophetic spirit ; for Casimir was in fact the only one among his sons who was useful to his country. Boleslas, by a particular clause in his testament, which gave his eldest son a certain superiority over his brothers, supposed that he should thereby prevent dissensions in his family ; but this was the principal cause of all the troubles which followed.

Under the reign of this prince, the Palatines of the different districts commanded the armies who were not composed of regular troops. All the lands in Poland were held in those days by military tenures, and the farmers were thereby obliged to follow their lords to the wars, and received no other pay but the plunder which they took from the enemy, which they preferred to the subsistence that they might have drawn from the earth by their daily labour. It is true, while these tenures were regularly kept up, agreeably to their primitive institution, Poland was a formidable military power ; but when the nobility and clergy had usurped all the liberties and privileges of the people, and

reduced them to the state of slavery, in which they continue to this day, this kingdom immediately began to fall a prey to its enemies.

No sooner was Boleslas buried, than Uladislas his eldest son, excited by his wife Christiana, daughter of Henry the Fifth, emperor of Germany, a haughty and ambitious princess, endeavoured to dispossess his brothers of the territories which their father had allotted them respectively.

Boleslas and Miecislav, driven out of their provinces, retired to Posenania, a town that was dependent upon the districts of their younger brother Henry, where they were besieged by Uladislas, who had now taken the title of duke of Poland; but one evening, while the enemies were plunged into all kinds of debauchery, the besieged made a sally, and with lighted torches in their hands set fire to the camp of the besiegers, massacred all who offered to make any resistance, and pursued their enemies several leagues; whereupon Uladislas, instead of retiring to Cracow, a strong place, where he might have been in safety to give orders for the re-establishing his affairs, retired into Germany, and abandoned his imperious wife to the vengeance of his exasperated brothers; but these princes did not think her of consequence enough to have any fear or dread on her account, but sent her into Germany to her cowardly husband.

Boleslas, the eldest of the brothers who remained in the kingdom, was now received as duke of Poland; but the emperor Conrad, who was just before returned into Germany from his unhappy expedition into Asia, supported, or at least appeared to support, the interests of Uladislas and Christiana. He immediately

niately assembled a powerful army, and himself conducted these fugitives to the frontiers of Poland. Boleslas, who wished to prevent his country from being ravaged and plundered, obtained a passport, and came into the camp of the emperor, and was admitted into his council, where he described the ambition and tyranny of Christiana, the easy and cowardly disposition of Uladislas, and the troubles to which the Poles were exposed during their administration in the strongest colours: "It was Uladislas," said he, "who made me take up arms; he wanted to destroy both me and my brothers; and would the emperor support the injustice which he ought to punish, and make it triumph over that innocence which he ought to protect? What pleasure can the emperor have to replunge the nation into a new series of disorders, which will be so much the more terrible, as Uladislas, when he is re-established upon the throne, will stain it more than ever by his vengeance and by his cruelties? Who will pretend to say that he will not draw the empire likewise into an abyss of troubles and confusion? and what recompence, what gratitude, what services can the empire expect from a prince who pays no regard to the sacred laws of nature? What reason did our father Boleslas give him to trample under-foot the dispositions which he made? And by what crime have we merited his aversion, seeing that we have taken every measure to make ourselves agreeable to him."

This discourse produced such an effect, that the next day the imperial army separated themselves, notwithstanding all that Uladislas could do to retain Conrad in his interests. Boleslas was now universally acknowledged duke of Poland, and continued in the peaceable possession of the throne till the year 1158, when
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the emperor Frederic resolved to re-establish the fugitive Uladislas in his territories: but before he attempted to carry this resolution into execution, he sent a deputation to Boleslas to order him to render justice to his brother, and also to demand an annual tribute of 500 marks of silver; or in case he refused to comply with these terms, to declare war against him immediately. “We love our country too much,” said Boleslas and his brothers, “to give it up to Uladislas; jealous of our just independence, we cannot think of becoming slaves; the loss of our territories, and even death itself, is less formidable to us than the humiliation which is proposed to us; we may fall, but our courage will vindicate us in the eyes of the whole world.”

Piqued at this haughty answer, the emperor immediately advanced into Poland; but Boleslas laid waste the country through which he was to pass, to prevent him from getting any subsistence; and his light troops and small parties continued to harass the imperialists as they advanced; so that weakened by the want of subsistence, by diseases, and by being continually harassed by the enemy, the troops of the emperor were soon reduced to one third of what they were at first; whereupon Frederic demanded an interview with Boleslas, and they agreed to lay down their arms, and the Polish princes ceded Silesia to Uladislas, and promised to furnish Frederic with 300 lances for the expedition which he was then preparing to make into Italy.

Soon after this peace was made Uladislas died; but the emperor obliged Boleslas to divide Silesia between the three sons of this prince: this was the first time that this rich province was separated from the hands of the Poles, who always regarded it as a fief of their crown; but this fief so on lost even the use of their
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mother tongue by the attention which the heirs had to fill the country with Germans, and to discontinue the Polish manners and customs as much as possible.

In the year 1164 Boleslas turned his arms against Prussia, the inhabitants of which were still idolaters, and endeavoured to force these people to destroy their sacred groves, and to burn their false gods; but at the same time the Poles so loaded them with taxes, and tyrannized over them in such a manner, that they again took up arms, drove the Romish clergy out of their country, and re-established their idolatrous form of worship; whereupon Boleslas entered Prussia a second time with his whole army, but confiding imprudently in some of the inhabitants of the country, they led his army into narrow passages, where those barbarians destroyed great numbers of them, so that the Poles were obliged to retire precipitately, and were a long time before they could recover their forces in such a manner as to face the enemy again.

Boleslas died at Cracow in the year 1173, leaving the character of being a greater politician than a warrior: he was undoubtedly master of the essential qualifications which are necessary for governing a state; for when he could not gain a point by force, he knew how to gain it by persuasion; he was fertile in resources, wise, prudent, and moderate; and by commanding his own passions he was generally in a situation to take advantage of those of others; he trusted too much to the imprudent and bad counsels of the clergy, whose wicked conduct was the means of losing Prussia, and of drawing him into great embarrassments.

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After the death of this prince, Miecislaw was elected duke of Poland; but the nation made a very bad choice; they placed an inflexible tyrant upon the throne, who trampled upon all their laws, and opened a door to all kinds of vices: his pride and haughtiness could only be equalled by his cowardice and tyranny. The bishop of Cracow undertook to lay the complaints of the people at the feet of this cruel prince; but they only served to irritate him, and to make him still more tyrannical; so that being sensible he could not succeed in his commission, this prelate assembled secretly all the nobility of the kingdom, where they deposed Miecislaw, and after some debates, Casimir his youngest brother was elected in his place.

It appears that the kingdom of Poland was at this time upon the same footing with the rest of the Gothic governments. The kingdom was partly elective, and partly hereditary; it was elective, because the concurrence of all the nobility and of the dignified clergy was absolutely necessary to raise the prince to the throne; and it was in some measure hereditary, because their choice was confined to the royal family.

Casimir signalized his advancement to the throne by his redressing many of the grievances of the people: when Christianity was first established in Poland, the Romish clergy, to gain the favour and protection of the nobles and of the proprietors of the fiefs, taught the people that they must submit patiently to all the impositions and oppressions of these little tyrants under pain of eternal damnation; and in consequence thereof the most unheard-of vexations and tyrannies were practised over the farmers and the common people: not content with having usurped almost all the rights and privileges of their fellow subjects, this imperious order

order established it as a custom, that when any of their class travelled from one province to another the farmers were obliged to find them lodging and entertainment for themselves, their servants, and their horses as long as they chose to remain in any place. The people not being in a situation to oppose them at first, and fearing the censures of the clergy, complied with this custom for some time, imagining that it could not be of any great consequence; but at length this usurpation was carried to such a height, and exercised with so much tyranny by these pretended nobility, that the poor farmers were reduced to the greatest misery, and were no longer in a situation to support these vexations, nor even to pay the public taxes. Casimir abolished this barbarous and usurped custom, which had become a source of rapine and plunder, together with the power which the nobles pretended to have, though unjust in itself and contrary to all laws both divine and human, to be the general heirs of those who died upon their fiefs.

Casimir mounted the throne of Poland in the year 1180; and from this time we may perceive that spirit of independence which constitutes at present the character of the Polish nobility, and which for several centuries past has been the cause of all the troubles of this kingdom, shewing itself in the strongest colours; an independence so much the more dangerous, as, in dictating the most severe and oppressive laws, it grants to itself the liberty of not submitting to them; and in placing a master upon the throne, it gives itself the right of not obeying him.

When the Polish nobility had deposed Miecislav, and given their voices to Casimir, they supposed that this prince ought to conduct himself according their ideas. Miecislav, knowing his

brother's good-nature and love of justice, solicited him to restore his crown and states to him; and this imprudent demand, so far from irritating Casimir, made him believe that he held the government by no other title but that of an usurper; he would abdicate it immediately, but he could not do it without the consent of the nobles who had elected him; whereupon he assembled the whole body of nobles and represented his doubts to them, with the unhappy situation of his brother, and the resolution which he had taken to resign the crown to him. Far from attributing this proposition to the good-nature and generosity of their prince, the Polish nobility regarded it as a mark of an unpardonable cowardice and irresolution: "What can you promise to yourself," says one of them boldly to their prince, "from your brother, who is inhuman by principle, wicked by habit, who breathes nothing but vengeance, and who believes that cruelty is a mark of reason? What can you think to receive from him? Can you have the least doubt but that he will confiscate your duchies, and repay himself for the losses and miseries to which you have reduced him by depriving him of his kingdom and permitting his son to seize upon his states? But after all, sooner than become the accomplices of an injustice which you think you have done your brother, sooner than make ourselves the ministers of your unhappiness as well as of our own, if you persist in your sentiments, we will renounce all obedience to you, and choose another master who is less barbarous through pity, and more jealous of our happiness and of our glory." Casimir was obliged to give way to the will and inclinations of his subjects, and to wear the crown even against his own desire.

In the following year this prince would retake the duchy of Halitz from the Russians, which this nation had some years before usurped; but these ferocious people, badly disciplined, but bold and courageous, came to meet him, in hopes of revenging themselves for all the injuries which they imagined the Poles had done them and their ancestors. Their army was so numerous, that when they came in fight of the Poles the latter were greatly intimidated; whereupon Casimir appearing at the head of his army, desired them to exert their valour—"You have one sure method to beat the Russians," said he, "and that is, not to fear them. They threaten you with death and slavery; promise me to use your utmost efforts to repulse them, and I will answer for your liberty and your lives. Moreover, I will not hide a matter from you which concerns you greatly; you are now going to fight upon the same field of battle where great numbers of your ancestors perished heretofore by the cowardice of those who were not ashamed to abandon it; and therefore this is the time for you to repair the honour of the one, and to revenge the death of the other. Those heroes who lie dead under your feet exhort you to it. If you respect their valour, can you fear that death which they despised? Is there any character more glorious than that of a citizen who, even in his last moments, would make himself useful to his country? But, in fact, I will shew you, by my example, how you are to serve your country; the man who dares brave the greatest dangers has no longer any fear."

This discourse kindled the Poles into the greatest fury; whereupon Casimir led them on to the enemy, and gained a complete victory.

While Cafimir was carrying on the war againſt the Ruſſians, Mieciflaw, ſupported by the princes of Sileſia his nephews, attempted by force to regain the throne of Poland; but Cafimir, with his victorious army, very ſoon forced him to abandon his enterprize, and kept the nation in peace and reſpected of its neighbours till the year 1194, when he was poiſoned, and died much regretted by all his ſubjects.

This prince, to whom they gave the title of Juſt, when he mounted the throne uſed his utmoſt endeavours, during the whole courſe of his adminiſtration, to merit it: he was humane, juſt, and courageous, and took every poſſible method, during the whole courſe of his reign, to make even the meanest of his ſubjects happy.

That love of independence and of a lawleſs liberty, for which the Polifh nobility have been always ſo conſpicuous, ſhewed itſelf very flagrantly at the death of Cafimir, when they thought that they had a right to chuſe a ſovereign without paying any regard to the ancient cuſtoms of the country, and diſdaining the young ſon of the late duke, they were ready to re-eleſt Mieciflaw; but the biſhop of Cracow oppoſed this plan, and proved to the nobility then aſſembled, that the excluſion which they meant to give to the legal heirs of the late duke, who had merited ſo well of them, was a kind of perfidiouſneſs and revolt, and contrary to the ancient laws and cuſtoms of the kingdom: whereupon the nobility, giving way to his arguments, proclaimed Leſzko, the ſon of Cafimir, duke, under the regency of Helen his mother. At this time the kingdom ſuffered much from a depravity of manners which reigned among all orders of people; but none were ſo abandoned, and led ſo ſcandalous a life

life as the clergy, who lived in a state of luxury and of ignorance that was scarcely to be paralleled in those days. Loaded with riches, and administrators of the free gifts and pious legacies which were given to the poor, they only regarded the useful practices of religion as proper for vulgar minds; and they lived in such a scandalous and debauched course of life, that they made no secret of keeping concubines, and of bringing their natural children to the succession of their benefices. In imitation of their clergy, the citizens likewise only regarded marriage as an inconvenient chain, which they might break whenever their passions or their caprices swayed them.

In the year 1200, the nobility carried their passion for independence and licentiousness to such a height that the ancient form of government was almost lost. The palatine of Sendomir and the palatine of Cracovia formed an open rebellion, and by this means afforded Miecislav an opportunity of remounting the throne, when he gave the queen-regent and her son to understand, that he would never suffer them to be quiet till they had formally ceded the right of governing to him. "Your friends," said he, "who have made themselves masters of the kingdom, have they talents to procure their fellow citizens all the happiness that they might have expected? Have they succeeded in any of their attempts? Born to serve, are they capable of commanding? It is well known that they are jealous of their power, only because they promise themselves the satisfaction of making a bad use of it. Moreover, I only ask the crown to secure it to my nephew by a stronger tie than a frivolous election, against which I protest from the motives of justice and equity, and which I will annul by force of arms." Helen gave way to the blandishments and threatenings of Miecislav; but

but she soon perceived that this prince only wanted to remove Leszko from the throne to place his own son on it; and during the course of the following year, Leszko, who had descended from the throne by the perfidious behaviour of his uncle, mounted it again by the intrigues of his mother; and was forced to quit it a second time, and give way to the party which his traiterous uncle had formed in the kingdom: but the sudden death of Miecislav put an end to the troubles of the state.

The conduct of this prince was base and contemptible; he despised the esteem of mankind, and knew no other pleasure in the sovereign authority but the barbarous satisfaction of being the tyrant of his people. After the death of Miecislav it was generally believed that the young Leszko would have again re-ascended the throne; in fact, all the nobility of the kingdom offered to submit themselves to him, on condition that he would detach himself from the connexions which he had with the palatine of Sendomir, who was his friend and minister. “The palatine,” answered Leszko to those who made the proposition, “is a wise and prudent man; his counsel is necessary, and has always been useful to me; I am constituted to protect the innocent, and not to punish them; the exiling this minister, whom I believe to be innocent, would be a very great crime in me, and I am determined not to purchase a crown so dear which otherwise belongs to me by right of birth, and to wear it according to the capricious fancy of a part of my subjects.”

Whereupon Uladislav, the eldest son of Miecislav, was elected; and what was very singular, this prince, who had a mind as great and as generous as that of Leszko, refused the crown for some time, as he knew that it legally appertained to his cousin, and

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would not accept it without his consent. Such examples are very rare in the history of the world !

Lefzko, now become a private person, and was only master of Sendomir and some other provinces, was attacked by Romain duke of Lucko, to whom he had ceded the duchy of Halitz ; whereupon he immediately armed what troops he could assemble, and gave battle to his ungrateful enemy, and gained one of the most complete and memorable victories that ever the Poles gained over the Russians. The glory with which he covered himself by this action made all the nation believe that he alone was capable of holding the reins of government ; and as the palatine of Sendomir, the only obstacle to his advancement to the throne, was now dead, Uladislas, who had mounted the throne with reluctance, descended with joy to place his cousin on it.

The reign of Lefzko would in all probability have been as long as it was glorious, if the hand of an assassin had not most cruelly terminated it.

The count of Suantopelk, governor of the Eastern Pomerania, becoming powerful in this province, attempted to make himself sovereign of it, and to transmit this usurpation to his son as if it had been a legal inheritance ; such was the consequence of that independency which those insolent usurpers the Polish nobility attempted in those days. Suantopelk first manifested his rebellion by refusing to pay the tribute of one thousand marks of silver which he owed every year to the crown ; whereupon he was invited to assist at a diet which was to be held at Gansaw in Great Poland : Suantopelk came to the diet, but attended with
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a great number of soldiers, whose march he hid, and whom he divided secretly about the environs of the place where the assembly was held; and in the moment when Leszko was coming out of the bath, without any arms and almost naked, this perfidious wretch ordered his attendants to fall upon him, and massacre him upon the spot.

All the sensible part of the Polish nation speak of Leszko with the greatest respect even to this day: he was a plain, modest, and good-natured prince, who loved and cherished his country: he was greatly above the throne which he occupied, rejected all the pomp and parade of it, and only sought in the supreme authority the opportunity to do good and to render justice to all mankind: he was an enemy to pride, and descended to converse with the least of his subjects to make himself acquainted with their wants and their misery, and to give them some speedy succours. After his death the states of the kingdom elected his son Boleslas, who was only seven years of age, to succeed him in the government; whereupon Conrad duke of Mazovia, uncle to the young prince, and Henry Barbu duke of Silesia, disputed the regency of the kingdom, so that all the provinces of Poland became now the theatre of a civil war, which in all probability would have destroyed the kingdom, if the wife of the duke of Silesia had not engaged her husband to desist from his pretensions.

Two years afterwards, 1230, the Prussians, who were still idolaters, entered the provinces of Poland with a great army, laid waste the province of Culm, burnt more than 250 churches, carried off a prodigious number of captives, and even continued their ravages into the province of Mazovia. The regent Conrad, fearing the savage cruelty of those barbarians, called the knights
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of the Teutonic order to his assistance.⁸ This order was instituted during the siege of Acre, which the Saracens took from the king of Jerusalem in the year 1188, and was afterwards confirmed by a bull of the pope Celestine the Third in the year 1191.

Herman Salza, their grand master, who had retired into the territories of Venice with his men after the order had been forced to abandon the Holy Land, sent seven deputies into Poland to treat with Conrad upon the conditions for their reception; the deputies engaged that their order should make a continual war upon the Prussians till these idolaters had embraced the Christian religion; and in consequence of this Conrad assigned them the castle of Dobrzyn and its dependencies; and some time afterwards, being well satisfied with their services, and in hopes of gaining some more considerable services from them, he ceded to them irrevocably all the territories of Culm, and all the country situated between the Vistula, the Mocra, and the Drwencza; but with these conditions, that they were to restore to Poland the half of the conquests which they made upon the Prussians, and that they should never undertake any thing against Poland, but be ready on all occasions to succour her against her enemies.

The immoderate ambition and avarice of the knights of the Teutonic order soon made Conrad repent of the indiscreet measure he had taken in dismembering his dominions in favour of such an order, who have since been the cause of the principal troubles and civil wars which have ravaged that kingdom, and, as will be hereafter clearly proved, laid the foundation for that enormous usurpation that in our days the Brandenburg family has so unjustly made upon the territories of Poland.

In the year 1238, Boleslas being of age took the reins of government into his own hands, but shewed much less talents for conducting it than Henry duke of Silesia had done, who succeeded Conrad in the regency; for in the year following, when the Tartars made their first excursion upon the Polish territories, they laid waste the country with an astonishing rapidity, and pushed their conquests even to the gates of Cracow; the timid Boleslas shut himself up in his capital without daring to go out to defend his people, who, through the tyranny and oppression of the nobility and clergy, were reduced to a state of slavery and pusillanimity. Those barbarians made an immense plunder in the kingdom, and carried off an amazing number of men and women in chains. Boleslas at length collected his forces, and gave battle to the Tartars in the plains of Cracovia; but these warlike plunderers, seeing the timidity of this prince and the panic with which his troops were seized, fell upon them with such fury that they soon put them to flight. After the loss of this battle Boleslas fled into Hungary, and from thence into Moravia; and the principal part of the people, when they saw themselves abandoned by their master, left the kingdom, with the best of their effects, and retired into Germany and into Hungary, while others hid themselves in the forests and in inaccessible places.

The Tartars, now seeing that they had no enemies to oppose them, continued their ravages, and penetrating into Silesia laid siege to Breslaw; but they were so terrified by some meteors which they saw in the air, that they raised the siege and retired with great precipitation; whereupon the Poles, a considerable number of Germans, of Silesians, and of the knights of the Teutonic order, united themselves to oppose the cruel ravages of
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of the Tartars, to whom they gave battle near Lignitz. The victory was disputed for a considerable time; but at length the Christians were obliged to fly, and leave a great number of their troops dead upon the field.

The shameful flight of Boleslas, when his assistance was necessary to support his country, obliged the Poles to elect another duke. All the voices were united in favour of Boleslas the son of Henry duke of Silesia; but this prince could not support himself against the forces of Conrad his competitor, who was also master of a sovereign fief of the kingdom. The civil war between these two princes, added to the devastations of the Tartars, completed the destruction of the kingdom. In the midst of these troubles the Poles were obliged to recall Boleslas their late duke, notwithstanding his shameful conduct; but the presence of this insignificant cypher, this phantom of a sovereign, contributed very little towards restoring tranquillity in the kingdom: indeed, if he had been a person of the greatest talents, he would have found much difficulty to have effected it at this time, when the ancient territories of Poland were divided among twenty-four vassals, who were almost as powerful as their chief, and who tyrannized over and destroyed their fellow-subjects to support a sovereign authority, of which they took every opportunity to extend the usurpation: now the dreadful effects of dismembering the kingdom began to shew themselves in the most glaring colours; and now the pernicious consequences of the doctrines and examples of the Romish clergy were no less destructive to the state: civil war, devastation, tyranny, oppression, murders, poisoning, and plundering almost desolated the whole face of the country. The people had been taught to submit implicitly to the dictates of their governors and superiors under

pain of eternal damnation; and those governors and superiors were now a set of the most tyrannical, cowardly, and barbarous wretches, who styled themselves nobility, and of the most profligate, ignorant, and abandoned clergy that ever disgraced human society. What could the people have otherwise expected from such masters?

The popes had for some time before assumed to themselves the right of granting the title of king; and in the year 1251, pope Innocent the Fourth created the province of Lithuania into a kingdom, and gave the title of king to Mandog its sovereign. The express words of the bull are these: "We receive this
" new kingdom of Lithuania as the right and property of
" St. Peter, and we take under our protection you, your wife,
" and your children."

However this bull was not sufficient to prevent Lithuania from being afterwards united to the crown of Poland. Boleslas, unhappily for the Poles, lived to the year 1279, and then died, much regretted by the clergy, to whom he gave immense treasures, but universally despised by all the rest of his subjects, who never found him disposed to defend them against their enemies. His devotion multiplied the troubles and unhappiness of his country. The Polish historians reproach him with suffering himself to be led aside, and with having often persecuted the innocent through ignorance and through avarice: he strictly adhered to all the little ceremonies of the Romish religion: he would have made a good monk, but was a very bad king. Some time before his death Boleslas had named Leszko, grandson of Conrad duke of Mazovia, to be his successor; but the most dangerous enemy which this young prince had when he came to the

the throne was the bishop of Cracow: this prelate, after having for some time led the most abandoned and debauched course of life, carried off a young and beautiful Nun from the monastery of Skala and kept her in his palace, which he made a kind of seraglio. Shocked at the bishop's behaviour, the pious Boleslas attempted to reclaim this prelate by remonstrances; but finding that he could not succeed by these means, he arrested him and shut him up in prison: whereupon the archbishop of Gnesna, irritated that this prince should pretend to chastise a seditious bishop who publicly dishonoured his character, re-claimed the prisoner, and laid the whole province under an interdict; so that some thousands of innocent Christians were denied the exercise of their religion, because the sovereign had legally attempted to punish an immoral and abandoned bishop: Boleslas was obliged to comply and to give up his prisoner; and for having dared to exercise his legal authority he was obliged to pay 200 marks of silver as a fine, to erect the lands of the licentious prelate into a duchy, and to imprison all the officers who had arrested him. Such were the manners of the Poles, and such was the despotism which the clergy exercised in those days: now if they dared treat their sovereign in this manner, what treatment were the people to expect from this abandoned order? Moreover, in revenge for this treatment, when Boleslas named Leszko to be his successor to the throne, the bishop of Cracow armed all his vassals, to whom he joined a band of robbers and of people of desperate fortunes, to oppose him, and offered the crown to Uladislas duke of Oppellan; but the bishop's party was beaten, and entirely exterminated. However, when Boleslas died, the bishop would have again resisted, and stirred up new troubles in the kingdom; but he was too weak to oppose the general desire of the nation, stifled his hatred, and apparently submitted to Leszko.

This

This prince was scarcely fixed upon the throne when the Russians, assisted by the Lithuanians and some hords of Tartars, entered Poland, and laid waste all the palatine of Sendomir with fire and sword; however Leszko, who immediately pursued them, gained a complete victory over them, and retook all the plunder which they had seized in Poland: but soon after the Lithuanians, then a warlike people, entered again into Poland with a powerful army, and before Leszko was in a situation to oppose them they had almost destroyed the palatinate of Lublin, and were retiring with their plunder. It then became a question whether the army should follow them, as the Poles, fatigued by a long march, were not much disposed to it; whereupon Leszko harangued them in the following manner: "My friends," said he to them, "the angel Gabriel appeared to me this night, and exhorted me to follow the enemy, and to attack them without fearing their force; therefore let us march on, since he has promised that I shall not lose one of the brave soldiers who have the courage to accompany me." Fired by this discourse, the Poles immediately advanced, and after some hours came up with the enemy, whom they attacked with such fury, that they gained a complete victory over them.

Early in the following year the Lithuanians entered Poland again with a powerful force, which was opposed by Leszko; but as soon as the battle became general, the Poles, intimidated by the boldness of their enemies, were beginning to fly, when Leszko presented himself before them, and addressed them in the following manner: "You lose by running away," said he to them, "that which will contribute to your victory; the enemy fears your reputation more than your arms: if you will only face them boldly, you will see them fly before you." These

few words re-animated the greatest cowards ; they returned immediately to the field of battle and gained a complete victory over the Lithuanians. The prisoners whom Leszko delivered on this occasion flattered his noble and sensible soul more than all the glory which he acquired by the victory ; so much was this prince disposed to be humane.

Two years afterwards, at the instigation of the seditious bishop of Cracow before-mentioned, the principal palatines of the kingdom revolted against Leszko, and endeavoured to make themselves absolute sovereigns in their respective territories, but they were soon defeated and demanded pardon ; when Leszko, instead of punishing them, applied himself to mortify their pride by loading them with favours. Such a behaviour would greatly influence a mind truly noble and generous ; but from the accounts which we have of them, it does not appear that the Polish nobility had at that time any idea of these great qualities. The Germans likewise, who had rendered him some services in this civil war, were appointed to be the guards of Cracow, and to have the care of the fortifications : Leszko dressed himself like them, and let his hair grow after their example to attach them the more intimately to his service.

This prince reigned till the year 1289, and died greatly regretted by his subjects ; but his death produced a five years course of civil war, which laid waste the whole country. There were no less than five candidates at this time who claimed the crown of Poland, and each candidate supported his pretensions by force. The independence of the palatines had thrown the government into anarchy and confusion ; and this
anarchy,

anarchy, by dividing the members, had ruined the whole body of the state.

Przemyslas at length succeeded, and mounted the throne ; but to unite his scattered forces, and thereby to save the kingdom from the hostile attacks with which it was then threatened by its foreign enemies, he took the title of king, without giving himself any uneasiness about what the court of Rome might think of his behaviour, who had forbidden his predecessors to assume that title. He was crowned at Gnesna by the archbishop of that place ; but the Poles soon lost the favourable hopes which the first months of the reign of this great prince had given them. The marquisses of Brandenbourg, like some of their worthy successors, who founded the augmentation of their power upon the troubles of Poland, and who waited every favourable opportunity to seize something, irritated to see their projects counteracted by the cares of the new king, resolved to assassinate him, as they dared not meet him in the field with open forces, and seized the first opportunity that presented to carry their diabolical scheme into execution. Przemyslas was surprized at Rogorno by the Marquisses Otto and John of Brandenbourg, accompanied by a number of their followers, and inhumanly massacred in his bed.

Przemyslas was a prince who had talents to re-establish Poland in its ancient splendor ; he was bold and enterprizing, firm when in danger, but avoided it with prudence ; he thought nobly, but was not haughty ; affable, without descending to meanness ; and, in fact, possessed all the qualities necessary to gain the esteem and respect of his subjects ; he was a lover of the laws, and made them be respected by all ranks of men ; he was severe without any distinction, and it was not observed that
his

his sentences were mixed with passion, nor his clemency with weakness; and, in fact, his general character was so just and equitable, that the people would have deemed themselves free in wearing his chains.

Uladiflas Loketek, who had already disputed the crown with his brother Przemyflas, now revived his pretensions, and was unanimously elected. This prince, by the great provinces which he possessed in Poland, was the only person then appearing as a candidate, who was in a situation to re-establish the affairs of the kingdom. He began his reign with great eclat, and made all his enemies fly before him; but proud of his successes, he ceased all on a sudden to be a great king, and surprized the nation by his debaucheries and cruelties: in vain did the bishop of Pofnania endeavour, as a zealous pastor, to reform him by his advice and remonstrances, and afterwards by excommunicating him; all produced no good effect, whereupon the nation murmured, and at length, tired of being tyrannized over, deposed Uladiflas, and elected Wenceslas king of Bohemia to be their sovereign.

Wenceslas, to support his election, married the daughter of Przemyflas, and was crowned at Gnesna; he afterwards passed through almost all the provinces and towns of Poland, which submitted to him without any resistance; but Uladiflas Loketek, who had taken refuge in Hungary, and who by his misfortunes was reformed, came into Poland the following year at the head of some troops, and seized upon several places in the duchy of Cracovia; on which, in hopes that their ancient master would govern them with more equity, and ashamed of being forced to obey a stranger, and to be the slaves of the Bohemians, many of the Polish nobility joined Uladiflas; and with them he again

entered Cracow. Soon afterwards a languor and an intermitting disorder seized Wenceslas, of which he died, and left his rival again in possession of the crown ; but he was no longer that Uladislas who was before feared and despised by his subjects : he was now reformed, and again acted as a great king ; he gave new laws to Pomerania, and entrusted the government of Dantzic to a gentleman called Boguff, who was a man of courage and bravery, and capable of defending it against the attempts of the marquisses of Brandenburg, who were threatening to besiege it. In fact, the Brandenburghers appeared very soon afterwards before the place, and Boguff did every thing that a brave and experienced officer could do to make a defence ; but his garrison, who were chiefly composed of Germans, seconded very weakly the efforts of their commander ; whereupon Boguff took a very extraordinary measure ; he left the town in this distressed state, and flew with the greatest expedition to Uladislas to lay before him the situation of this fortress ; the king advised him with a good intention, but very imprudently, to call the Knights of the Teutonic order to his assistance, who engaged themselves to defend Poland against his enemies. This advice was followed, the knights arrived, and Dantzic was delivered ; but scarcely were the gates opened, when these false allies made themselves masters of the town, threw Boguff into prison, and would not release him but upon condition of being indemnified for the advances which they had made for succouring the town. Shocked at the unworthy behaviour of the knights, Uladislas demanded an interview with the grand master of their order at Krajowicze, in the palatinate of Cujavia, where, after having reproached him with some bitterness for the behaviour of his knights, he asked him, “ Whether he had not been informed that there was not any power
 “ in Europe that would give the remains of his order a resting
 “ place,

“ place, after they were driven out of Palestine, when the sove-
“ reign of Poland furnished them with a small province of his
“ territories? This prince,” added Uladislas, “ permitted you
“ likewise to extend yourselves in the territories of Prussia; he
“ was not then in possession of these territories it is true, but
“ they were justly his property; he might have subdued them
“ by his arms, but he chose rather to permit you to conquer
“ them, on condition that you restored him certain districts
“ which were then mentioned, but which you have never re-
“ stored; on the contrary, you have not yet surrendered the
“ district which was only granted you for a time, when you were
“ in the greatest distress, but have taken every opportunity, by the
“ most cowardly and unworthy means, to seize upon districts which
“ you dared not nor could you take by open force. We know very
“ well the insatiable avarice which predominates in your order, and
“ what means you use to bring us under your power; under the
“ humble cloak of affected respect, you hide the yoke that your
“ pride prepares for us, and by forcing us to put ourselves under
“ your empire, you would appear surprized to see us under your
“ subjection. Is this all that we are to expect from your promises,
“ your oaths, and your treaties? You are more barbarous than
“ the idolaters whom we left you to subdue. Do you think
“ that you are never to repay our good actions and kindnesses
“ towards you, but by ingratitude and injuries?”

The grand master did not endeavour to refute this discourse; he agreed that his order had done wrong, and promised to restore Dantzic and its fort, according to the tenor of the treaties, but he carried the indemnities stipulated by the convention so high, that it was in some measure impossible and even disgraceful to satisfy them. In the course of the following year 1310, the

Knights of the Teutonic order made several attempts to make themselves masters of all that part of Pomerania which was not already under their power. They besieged the town of Dirshaw, and the grand master, to intimidate the garrison, erected two gibbets near the ramparts, and threatened to hang up all who should fall into their hands, if the governor did not immediately send them hostages to treat of a capitulation. Every day they hanged up some of these unhappy farmers and poor countrymen who were so unlucky as to pass by. One of the commanders of this order, Ziffrid de Wassenfeldt, went out every day on horseback with as many cords as he could gather up in the tents, and swore that he would not eat till he had employed them all to strangle those Pomeranians who fell into his hands.

This was the religious order that was established by the pope to preach and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ among the idolaters of Prussia. I should have observed, that the Pomeranians were at this time Christians, and it does not appear that they had given any provocation to the knights of this order, therefore if we may judge of a tree by its fruit, the principles of Mahomet were infinitely to be preferred to those of the wicked popes of these days, and to those of the wicked and infamous instruments which they employed for this purpose, who, under the cloak of propagating a religion which breathes nothing but peace, love, and unity, filled the world with wars, bloodshed, horrors, and oppression.

The town of Dirshaw was afterwards obliged to submit to the power of these knights, and then they became masters of all Pomerania. The following years were fatal to Poland from the famine which raged there, and carried off great numbers of its inhabitants.

inhabitants; this likewise prevented Uladislas from revenging the insults and depredations which the Teutonic order had made upon the frontiers of his kingdom; however, as he could not make war upon them, he solicited the pope to punish them, and the instant appeared so much the more favourable, as all the great powers of Europe were highly dissatisfied with their abominable conduct, as well as with that of the order of the Knights Templers, which order was about this time abolished, and their grand master burnt in France: the marquisses of Brandenburg were the only power that gave any assistance to those Teutonic Knights.

On taking a cursory view of the extraordinary house of Brandenburg, it is almost impossible to think otherwise but that it was formed by Divine Providence to be a scourge to the human species; founded upon rapine and plunder, and built by tyranny and oppression, from its being first known in the world to this day, its pretended princes have never ceased to oppress and to tyrannize over those people who were so unhappy as to be born in their districts, and without any provocation to enrich themselves by robbing and plundering their neighbours. I could not help smiling when I read the extraordinary account of the family of *Hohensollern*, which was lately published under the title of *Memoirs of the house of Brandenburg*; because we must either discredit the annals and public records of Poland, and all the German and Polish historians of those days, or we must regard this work as fallacious, and as an imposition upon mankind. The manifesto likewise which was published some years since, to prove the legal pretensions which a certain power had to Polish Prussia, is as fallacious and as void of truth, as the work before-mentioned.

But

But to return to my subject: Upon the complaints of Uladislas, and of some other powers, the pope ordered the archbishop of Gnesna to excommunicate the Teutonic Knights, if they persisted in keeping the province of Pomerania, and soon afterwards ordered some apostolic commissioners to assemble upon the frontiers of Poland to examine into the facts and to judge this order, which was soon after condemned to restore Pomerania to Uladislas, and to pay him 150,000 marks of silver, and 30,000 marks to the inhabitants for the damages which they had done. All the knights were excommunicated, and their provinces laid under an interdict. Uladislas, notwithstanding this papal thunder, did not receive Pomerania from the Teutonic Knights, who, like a late modern order, endeavoured to gain their point by intriguing, when they could not do it by open force; but in the year 1325 he attempted to regain this province by force, and at the same time to punish the marquisses of Brandenburg, not only for the infamous assassination of Przemyflas his predecessor, but also for assisting the Teutonic Knights for carrying on their robberies, and plundering upon the frontiers of his kingdom; and for this purpose he assembled an army of Poles, Lithuanians, and some Russians, and entered into the marches of Brandenburg, which he laid waste by fire and sword, the marquisses not being in a situation to oppose his progress; but by the prudent conduct of the Teutonic Knights, who finding they were not strong enough to meet him openly, harrassed his march, and obliged him to retire out of Pomerania.

The great province of Silesia, which had always heretofore been a fief of the crown of Poland, was now separated from it for ever: divided into a number of little sovereignties, as hath been already observed, all the little princes who governed it, declared them-

themselves vassals to and put themselves under the protection of John king of Bohemia, who finding that his intrigues would not assist him to mount the throne of Poland, applied his abilities towards separating this great and rich province from that crown, and succeeded. However Uladislas on the other hand, after having signed a truce for a certain number of years with the Teutonic Knights, married his son Casimir to the daughter of Gedimin duke of Lithuania, and this alliance was the cause of the union of this great duchy to the crown of Poland.

In the year 1331, Uladislas felt his body sinking under the weight of age and infirmities, and ardently wished to revive himself in his son Casimir, and to leave to his subjects a prince worthy to govern them; he had already established him as sovereign of Great Poland, of which Samohely, who had assisted him to conquer it, was the Palatine. Samohely regarding himself as rejected and despised, applied to the Teutonic order for assistance to revenge himself; such was the disposition of the Palatines of Poland in those days, and such has it remained ever since: they entered Poland with a great army, and laid waste all the country on both sides of the Wartha, almost destroyed the provinces of Cujavia and of Siradia, burnt Lencici and Gnesna, and pillaged the palatinate of Kalisch. On this occasion old Uladislas put himself in march to oppose this torrent; he had but a small body of troops with him, and soon perceived that he was not in a situation to support himself but by avoiding a general battle, and by harassing the enemy: he likewise attempted to bring back the perfidious Samohely to his duty. The Palatine, on an interview which he had with his master, was stung with remorse, and promised faithfully to second his enterprize. The same night as he was determined to attack the enemy, Ula-

dislas

dislas made a long harangue to his soldiers, in which he forgot nothing to revive in them the remembrance of their former exploits, of the love of their country, and the interest of their religion: "Many of your fellow-citizens," said he, "are slaves in the camp that we are going to attack; you may hear from hence their plaintive voices; conceive at least, by the pains which they endure, how much they will owe you for their deliverance. If they saw you in the same situation, and they were free as you are, they would make powerful efforts of valour to break your chains. But with what kind of enemies have we to contend? With a number of ungrateful wretches who make use of what we have generously bestowed upon them to crush us; with a band of robbers, who being nourished in blood and murder, know no other manner of conquering our provinces but by destroying them entirely, and would not leave us any thing there but the air which we breathe; with a set of impious wretches who burn our temples and destroy our altars; with a collection of the most abandoned wretches of all nations, who love nothing but licentiousness, and who have no ideas of honour and probity. Are men of this character to be feared?"—This is the character which a Christian king gives of the champions of the church militant of Rome, and who were appointed by the popes to propagate and defend the Christian religion.

After having made this speech, Uladislas attacked the army of the Teutonic Knights; victory held the balance even for several hours, and the Poles shewed great bravery against superior numbers; but at length Samohely, who was placed in the posterior ranks of the army, kept his promise, and gave the signal to those whom he had gained over by his presents, who attacked the

the enemy in the rear, whilst the Poles pressed them in front ; and now some minutes were sufficient to put the enemy's army to flight, who left 20,000 soldiers dead upon the field.

The following year, 1333, Uladislas died, who when he was upon his death-bed, gave the following instructions to his son Casimir : “ If you have any regard for your honour and renown, “ take care that you cede nothing to the knights of the Teu- “ tonic order, nor to the marquisses of Brandenbourg, but rather “ resolve to bury yourself under the ruins of your throne than give “ up to them those parts of your inheritance which they possess, “ and which you owe to your people, and to your children. “ Do not leave to your successors an example of cowardice, “ which is sufficient to tarnish all your virtues, and the splendour “ of your reign. Punish the perfidious ; and being more happy “ than your father, if it is possible, drive them out of a king- “ dom that was the respectable asylum which piety opened “ to them, but which they have profaned by the blackest in- “ gratitude.”

In the early part of life the violence of his passions drew Uladislas into a chain of disorders, which lost him the esteem of his subjects, and his throne ; but adversity reformed him intirely ; and when he mounted the throne the second time, his subjects found him affable, good-natured, a lover of virtue, and a master who took every opportunity to favour and to recompense merit.

No sooner had Casimir mounted the throne, than forgetting the instructions which he had received from his father, he signed a treaty of peace with the Knights of the Teutonic order,

who restored to Poland the palatinate of Cujavia, and the district of Dobrzin, and therewith paid 10,000 florins, and Casimir renounced for him and for his successors, all his rights to Pomerania. This treaty is very expressive, and clearly proves the right of Poland to this province, and yet the author of a certain manifesto, which was lately published at Berlin, in order to prove the right of the house of Brandenburg to part of the Polish dominions, would insult mankind by telling them that this province was the absolute property of some of his ancestors, and was taken from them by the superior force of the Teutonic order.

No sooner was peace made with the knights of this order, but it was again broken. This turbulent and imperious order would not evacuate the province of Cujavia before Casimir had called a diet, so that the treaty might be approved by all the orders of the kingdom, though this was never mentioned during the time that the negociation was carrying on. However the king convoked a general diet, and remarked, that the critical situation of the kingdom might authorize in some measure the shameful peace which he had made; but they observed that a sovereign ought never to carry his vices beyond his reign, so as to prevent his subjects from taking proper means to repair their losses; in fact, they concluded to reject every convention that was made with the knights of this order. Casimir had only one daughter by his wife Ann, daughter of the duke of Lithuania, and therefore he chose for his successor his nephew Lewis, son of Charles Robert king of Hungary: but it was not till after some violent debates that his choice was approved by the different orders of the kingdom. It was stipulated in the solemn act which called Lewis to the throne of Poland, that this prince should never pretend to it, in case that Casimir had ever any male

male children who survived him, or even after their decease, supposing the king should leave such issue male.

In the year 1340 the death of Boleslas duke of Kiovia gave Casimir an opportunity to retake the provinces which before appertained to the crown of Poland, especially as the Russian provinces and forces were at this time greatly weakened by their intestine divisions, and by their wars with the Tartars. In the course of this year likewise Casimir lost his wife Ann of Lithuania, and soon after married the daughter of the Landgrave of Hesse; but fatigued by her insupportable pride, and by her continual reproaches touching his frequent infidelities, he exiled her to Zarnowiec, and took the daughter of a Jew, called Hester, to be his mistress: this Jewess was a person of great beauty, and what was very singular, the king not only permitted her to educate two daughters which he had by her in the Jewish religion, but through her means he granted her nation all the great privileges which they have ever since enjoyed in this kingdom, which has often since been called the Paradise of the Jews. As all great men suffer themselves to be led away at times by the violence of their passions, without losing the view of the duties which their glory imposes upon them; so was Casimir, whose licentious manners often drew him into embarrassments: he signed a new treaty of peace in the year 1343 with the Knights of the Teutonic order, who now restored to him the province of Cujavia, and the territory of Dobrzin; but he abandoned for ever Pomerania, the district of Michalow, and the province of Culm, at present a part of what is called Polish Prussia, though it is pretended by the Berlin manifesto before-mentioned, that this province likewise appertained to the ancestors of the house

of Brandenburg, and that they were deprived of it by the superior forces of the Teutonic order.

Casimir attacked Silesia this year, and annexed to the crown of Poland the strong town of Travenstadt; he beat the Russians, and forced the king of Bohemia, who made an invasion in his territories, to fly before him; and what was still more singular in this prince, though he was so much addicted to voluptuous pleasures, he became the legislator of his kingdom, and reformed many abuses which the barbarity of the times had introduced into the courts of justice. For the decision of a law-suit, the judges had ordered, that one of the parties should take an oath which they had composed, and which he was likewise to read aloud before the court, and if he did not pronounce it with a strong firm voice, if he hesitated, if he changed the least word, or if the least alteration appeared in his countenance, notwithstanding his pretensions were ever so well founded, he lost his cause, and became an object of public contempt. Casimir abolished this barbarous and abominable custom, and corrected many others which had been established in those unenlightened times: he loved his subjects, particularly the farmers and the people of the country, who were at that time grievously oppressed: whenever any of the latter came to complain to the king of the injustice of their masters, he always asked them whether they had neither sticks nor stones in their houses to defend themselves? giving them to understand, that their pretended masters had no authority over them but what they had usurped, and that they might legally defend themselves.

Before the reign of this prince all the property of a farmer who died without children devolved to the proprietor of the fief on which

which he lived; but seeing the wickedness and injustice of this proceeding, he ordered it that in future it should be the inheritance of the nearest relation of the deceased.

In the beginning of the reign of Casimir, the proprietors of the fiefs pretended that all those persons who were born upon their respective fiefs were their slaves, and that they could not remove from their habitations without the particular consent and approbation of their respective lords. But this just king, who was well informed of the wickedness and tyranny of these usurpations, abolished them intirely, and permitted every farmer, if he thought himself molested or ill treated by the proprietor of the fief, to sell his property, and to retire wherever he pleased: moreover the proprietors of the fiefs had claimed a power of giving their farmers as hostages, or as a security to each other as well as to strangers for the performance of contracts or agreements; which practice they had carried to a most infamous height, and thereby oppressed and vexed those poor people beyond all description: Casimir likewise abolished all these acts of tyranny, and forbade any proprietor of a fief to practise the same in future, under the most severe penalties. So many just and useful regulations framed in favour of the oppressed part of the nation, made many of the haughty and insignificant nobility give Casimir the title of King of the Farmers, though in my opinion this title, as he protected the oppressed, and taught the proud oppressors to know their master, was more to his honour than any other title they could have bestowed upon him; and if all his successors had in this particular followed his example, Poland would have been to this day a great and powerful nation.

But

But as great virtues are often accompanied with great vices, Casimir frequently fell into unpardonable excesses and luxuries, particularly in eating and drinking, and his example made the Poles give themselves up to the same kinds of debauch, with an indiscretion that neither time nor reason has since been able to correct; moreover his incontinence had no bounds, and his palaces became the places of prostitution, where, without any taste or delicacy, a number of innocent, and oftentimes unworthy victims, were sacrificed at the shrine of debauchery.

The whole nation imitated their master, and by little and little the corruption of manners spread itself among all orders of people. At length however a priest of Cracow dared raise his voice to reproach Casimir with the atrociousness of his conduct; but his indiscreet zeal was immediately punished; the king ordered him, when he was in a fit of passion, to be drowned in the Vistula; but this action, worthy of a tyrant, set all his subjects against him; and the plague, which soon after followed, appeared to them as the chastisement of heaven for this horrid crime; indeed Casimir thought the same, and repented sincerely of what he had done; he even solicited the pope for absolution, and submitted himself to the penitence that was imposed upon him. Whoever would search after the origin of the actual liberties of the Polish nobility, will find it during the reign of this prince, who, under the cloak of moderation, knew how to make himself despotic: he apparently commanded peaceable and submissive subjects; but in fact, he commanded a people who had revolted against his authority. The states of the kingdom acknowledged and approved the choice which the king had made of his nephew the king of Hungary to succeed him; but afterwards they sent their deputies to Buda, to inform him of the approach-

approaching death of his uncle ; and at the same time demand some new privileges, which they represented as the only means of increasing the affection of his subjects who raised him to the throne. Whether that the king of Hungary did not perceive the consequences of what they demanded of him, or whether he proposed to himself to break all the promises which he had made, he obliged himself to exempt the Polish nation from all kinds of taxes and contributions when he came to the throne, and not to avail himself of any pretence to impose subsidies ; not take any thing when upon a journey for the support of his court, more than what had been established by custom for time immemorial, and to reimburse the expences and even the damages caused by any wars which he might undertake against the neighbouring powers.

The act which contained these articles was signed as well for him as for his successors, and was for ever to be regarded as a fundamental law of the kingdom. The Aristocracy of the nobles was hereby established upon a permanent foundation, but the power of the crown was destroyed, supposing that the act of this prince before he came to the throne of Poland, was binding on the kings who succeeded him upon that throne.

Casimir died in the year 1370, and by his death the crown of Poland entirely removed from the Piast family, who had worn it above 500 years.

If Casimir had great faults, it must be acknowledged that he had also great virtues : he was good-natured, affable, complaisant, and knew how to captivate the hearts of mankind : he was a friend to the oppressed, and to those who had merit, whom he
generally

generally regarded and recompensed : he was active in detecting acts of injustice, and no less severe in punishing them ; but, says a Polish author, he always punished as a father, and recompensed as a king.

Lewis king of Hungary had no sooner mounted the throne of Poland, than he alienated the hearts of all his new subjects from him ; he set aside the testament of Casimir, and removed the proprietors from the domains and the palatinates which they held from the munificence of this king, and gave them to his creatures ; he declared the two daughters of his uncle illegitimate, and sent them into Hungary ; fearing that they might afterwards marry princes who might one day dispute the crown with him. A conduct so indiscreet could not fail to add new force to that spirit of independence which had already spread among all the Polish nobility ; and Lewis, shocked at the resistance which they appeared to make to his orders, returned into Hungary, and left the government of Poland in the hands of the queen Elizabeth his mother.

In the year 1372 Lewis ceded all his pretensions to the province of Silesia to Sigismund marquis of Brandenburg, which he had no right to do without the consent of the states of the kingdom ; though it is upon this foundation that the present king of Prussia has built all his claims to this province, and to revenge himself of the Poles for the murmuring and opposition which they made to this grant, he renewed, notwithstanding the oath which he had taken, the ancient tax called *Krolewczynna*, which signifies the royal tax. The farmers were obliged to give the prince, according to this regulation, a certain quantity of grain, and a sum of money, the value of the whole being

being about one shilling and six-pence sterling for every acre of arable land. The Poles made strong remonstrances against this tax, and at length got it reduced to one third of what it originally was; but with this condition, that they would choose one of the daughters of Lewis to be their sovereign, if he died without male heirs. The nation were not then afraid to introduce an order of succession which had not been followed during the period that the Piasz family had been seated on the throne; but they marched on to liberty under the covert-way of a feigned obedience: the states insisted that the land-tax as now regulated should be the only tax upon the nobility and upon the farmers; that the offices and places in the administration of the public affairs should always be granted to Poles during life; and particularly that the command of the fortresses and castles should be entrusted to the common nobility, and not to those who by their great riches and power might make themselves chiefs of a dangerous party. Lewis granted them all they desired; and from this time we may date the origin of that republican government or aristocracy which has ever since continued in this kingdom, and which has been always active to support the privileges that it has given itself against the prerogatives of the crown. It appears from the annals and historians of Poland, that though a king was not legally invested with the royal power before he was approved by the general voice of the people, yet when he was so chosen and crowned, he was invested with the whole legislative authority, till the beginning of this reign: the executive part of the sovereign power was chiefly entrusted to the palatines, governors, and other great officers of state. There are many examples in the history of this kingdom, where the people deposed their king when he behaved ill, but not one

instance where they pretended to share the legislative authority with him.

After Lewis had granted the before-mentioned privileges to the nation in general, and others to the senate, which in later ages has been invested with a great part of the executive power, but which till the reign of Lewis was very little esteemed, the members of this great council, clandestinely supported by the states, entered frequently into disputes with the sovereign, assumed to themselves a considerable part of the sovereign authority, and continually opposed the aristocratical government against the prerogatives of the crown. During the first years of this reign the Lithuanians ravaged several of the provinces of Poland; and Lewis, finding all his measures opposed by the Polish nobility, made a peace with them, which was very disadvantageous to the nation. In the year 1381 the people of Poland seemed to be determined to establish their new-born liberties and privileges, and the king resolved to support his rights.

In the midst of these commotions Lewis convoked a diet to meet at Buda in Hungary, where, according to the accounts of the best authors, only fourteen senators attended, who subscribed to the demand which the king made of dismembering from the crown of Poland some provinces which bordered upon Hungary: and upon this foundation the empress-queen of Hungary, in our days, formed her pretensions to those provinces, but with what justice will hereafter appear. The bishop of Uladislaw was the only person who opposed this act of cowardice; and having informed Raphael Granowski, the great general of the crown, of what had passed, this latter, in concert with the archbishop of Gnesna

Gnesna and the general of Great Poland, convoked a general assembly of the states, where the king and the senators of his party were invited. The king came there, attended by all those of his party; whereupon Granowski seized those senators who had signed this act, and ordered their heads to be cut off and their bodies to be placed at the foot of and around the throne, and to be covered with tapestry.

Lewis, who was not informed of this terrible execution, entered the hall of the senate, when the general of the crown, in the name of the states, reproached the king with every thing that he had done against the interests of the state; protested in form against all that had been done at Buda; and afterwards raised the tapestry, and shewed him the dead bodies of those senators: "Behold," said he to Lewis, "what will be the punishment of those traitors who shall adhere to your interests in prejudice to those of their country."

The following year the king sent his son-in-law, Sigismund of Brandenburg, to govern Poland in his name, whom he had likewise by a diet, which had sold themselves to his interests, got acknowledged to be his successor; but he died at Tyrnau before Sigismund entered Poland, and the whole body of the Polish nation, who were now united to support their own interests, refused to subscribe to this election, and to have any connection with the family of Brandenburg, whose tyrannical and oppressive principles were well known, even in those days, and called the princess Hedwige, the second daughter of Lewis, to the throne, on condition that she married a prince who was agreeable to the nation.

Among all the princes who pretended to the crown of Poland, and to be the husband of Hedwige, Jagellon duke of Lithuania was preferred, in consequence of the great advantages which he offered to the Polish nation. The Lithuanians were still idolaters; but Jagellon promised not only to become a Christian himself, but to endeavour to reduce all his subjects to the same mode of thinking; and he observed his promise. Master of very considerable territories, he united them to the kingdom; and thus Lithuania, Samogitia, and a part of Russia became provinces of Poland; and he moreover engaged himself to re-conquer Pomerania, Silesia, the palatinate of Culm, and all the territories which had been torn from the state by the unsuccessful wars of his predecessors. Hedwige would have lived happy with her husband, who was an honest man, if calumny had not thrown some of her dangerous shafts at her. One of her courtiers, for some motives which history has not yet developed, informed Jagellon that the queen still preserved a tenderness for William duke of Austria her first lover, whom she continued to see in secret. Transported with rage on hearing this news, Jagellon resolved to be separated from his wife immediately; but some of his favourites, having reason to suspect the truth of this intelligence, interrogated the accuser and intimidated him; and as this wretch could not support his accusation by any proof, he was condemned to suffer the punishments which were inflicted upon calumniators; which, as they are singular in their nature, and are still practised in Poland, I will set forth at large.

When a calumniator is judicially convicted of his crime, he is conducted into the great hall of the senate, where he is obliged to lie down under the seat of him whom he has offended, and there,

there, in this humiliating situation, he is obliged to pronounce, with a loud voice, that he repents sincerely of the calumnies and falsehoods which he has wickedly spread against the reputation of the person whom he accused, and that he lied like a dog; and after this public confession the guilty person is obliged to counterfeit three times the barking of a dog, which terminates this singular scene.

In the year 1399 the queen Hedwige died, greatly esteemed by all her subjects for her piety and virtues; and Jagellon, who was returned from his errors, and had rendered her his love and friendship, was inconsolable for her loss. He had formed a resolution to abdicate the crown, which he supposed he had held only in right of his deceased wife, and would retire into his own territories; but the principal persons of the kingdom, alarmed at this unexpected measure, went immediately to the king, and renewed their oaths of fidelity to him, and engaged him to retake the reins of government into his hands, and to marry the princess Ann, daughter of the late king Casimir.

Soon after this the inhabitants of Bohemia were highly disgusted with the conduct of Wenceslas their king, whose infamous debaucheries dishonoured the crown, which they offered by their deputies to Jagellon, who refused it, and made a very extraordinary speech to the deputies on this occasion: "Your king," said he, "does not owe his crown to any earthly power, and is accountable for his defaults to God alone: if he dishonours his rank by his conduct, his subjects are not his judges, and it is even an advantage to them that they are not; for they could never be happy if the legislative power did not reside only in the person of the sovereign: there is no unhappy situation

“ situation equal to that of a state where the sovereign authority
“ is divided among the multitude : the confusion that you would
“ introduce into your kingdom will be more dreadful than the
“ vices of a master whose excesses you abhor. You have no
“ other arms to make use of at present but patience ; and
“ though I am extremely sensible of the esteem which
“ you have manifested towards me, I am much less touched
“ with it than astonished at your assurance in proposing to me
“ to do an act of injustice which is so opposite to my sen-
“ timents.”

Though I am by no means of Jagellon's opinion in every respect, I cannot help admiring his honesty. Bohemia was at this time a monarchy, partly elective and partly hereditary, like the rest of the northern governments. When a king mounts the throne, he, at least tacitly, enters into a contract with his people to govern them justly, and according to the received fundamental laws and customs of the country ; but the moment that he wantonly breaks this social contract they are no longer bound in obedience to him, but have a right, according to the laws of God and nature, to depose him and to choose another sovereign. All mankind are born equal when in a state of nature, but when they enter into civil society, and engage for themselves and for their descendents to give up a part of their natural rights to live peaceably and quietly and according to certain prescribed forms under the direction of a chief, they are obliged to conform to the terms therein prescribed ; and every opposition which they make thereto may justly be regarded as an act of rebellion, so long as such chief continues to perform his part of the contract, which is severely censured by the divine laws, and is no less repugnant to the laws of every well-regulated society ; and consequently,

frequently, as Jagellon has justly observed, nothing can equal the unhappy situation of a country whose inhabitants are in a state of confusion and anarchy, where every person thinks himself superior to all laws and regulations. Jagellon's opinion respecting the unhappy state of a power where all the legislative authority is not vested in one person cannot be adopted; because we have many instances of a well-regulated form of government where the legislative authority is vested in a certain number of persons, with proper limitations; but then those persons act as a corporate body, and consequently represent the sovereign. I am of Jagellon's opinion, that no sovereign is accountable for his conduct to his subjects, except he breaks the contract which is between them, that bond of human society; in which case they have an undoubted right to depose him; but while he is their sovereign they have no right to judge him, neither have they any laws whereby they can condemn him; so that all the redress they can legally have in this situation is to depose him, and to choose a new master.

But to return to my subject: In the year 1408, Jagellon declared war against the knights of the Teutonic order, and appointed his cousin, the governor of Lithuania, to a principal command in the army under him. While the king was at his devotions, several of his officers came at different times to inform him that the army of those knights drew near; but Jagellon continued his prayers with great devotion, so that many regarded his pious resignation to the will of God as an act of cowardice: even the enemies remarked that the Poles began to dread their approach, and formed the same opinion of their king; so that their grand master at length sent deputies to him, who presented him with two naked and bloody swords: "Our chief," said they,
"is

“ is not afraid to furnish you with arms to inspire you with more
“ courage, as we are upon the point of beginning the battle : if
“ the ground upon which you are encamped is too narrow, and
“ you are too much crowded to go through your military
“ exercises, we will consent to retire a little.”

Jagellon, who notwithstanding his indifference and apparent inattention had taken his measures with great exactness, and without appearing to be offended with this bravado, informed the deputies, that he was greatly surprized that their grand master should press him so strongly to receive their arms : “ I
“ receive those that you present me,” said he, “ with pleasure,
“ as I draw a favourable omen from them for the success of this
“ day.” Certainly there was never any audacious act punished more cruelly than this was, for out of 140,000 soldiers, of which the army of the Teutonic knights was composed, 50,000 fell dead upon the field of battle, among which was their grand master and 300 of their principal knights or commanders, and 11,000 were made prisoners. During the course of this battle Jagellon perceived that the right wing of his army began to give way, whereupon he escaped from among his guards and ran into the middle of his troops, rallied them with great exactness, and led them on again to the combat. One of the enemy’s knights, completely armed, attacked the king with his sabre in his hand, and would soon have cut him short in his career ; but a young Pole, called Sbignee Olesnicki, who alone saw the danger the king was in, though he had only a piece of his lance left him, struck this bold knight so violently with it that he laid him dead at his feet, and thereby saved his master. Penetrated with gratitude, and pleased with the zeal and courage of his deliverer, Jagellon would have made him a knight immediately

mediately upon the field of battle and have invested him with the military banner; but the modest Pole refused it, confessing at the same time, that he designed himself for the service of the church; Jagellon afterwards gave him the bishopric of Cracow. The knights of the Teutonic order were so humbled by this battle that they never after attempted to make head against Jagellon during the whole course of his reign.

In the year 1313 the inhabitants of Lithuania and Samogitia, according to the Polish historians, were converted to the Christian religion; and this conversion was so much the more remarkable, because, as they had not at that time ecclesiastics enough in Poland who knew the Lithuanian language, the king had so much zeal for his religion that he preached the gospel himself, and thereby greatly contributed to propagate the Christian doctrines in those provinces.

Jagellon continued to govern his kingdom with great justice and integrity, and was universally esteemed for his honest and upright conduct, until the year 1433, when, in a diet held at Brzescia, the Poles named Uladiflas, his eldest son, to succeed him, but under the promise that the king would confirm their ancient privileges, and grant them some new ones which they then demanded. Pressed to declare his sentiments, and shocked at the audacious manner in which the nobles explained themselves, Jagellon answered, that what they demanded of him was unjust, and his honour, as well as what he owed his subjects in general, forbid him to grant it them; whereupon there was a general cry of indignation throughout the whole assembly, and they called upon the bishop of Cracow to produce the act which had been signed respecting the election of the prince, and which

had been entrusted to him, and having received it, they cut it in pieces before the king's eyes. Jagellon did not appear to be at all moved at this audacious act, but shewed an intrepidity which silenced the seditious. This was what the Polish nobility called their liberty; but such an example of licentiousness towards so good and so worthy a king as Jagellon, is not to be found perhaps in the annals of history. However, as this prince was a man who always made it a point of conscience to fulfill his promises and to keep his word even with the meanest of his subjects, though he would not be forced to comply with the requests of the nobility when demanded in such outrageous manner, he afterwards fulfilled his promises, and confirmed all the privileges which had been granted to the people by Lewis, and added several new ones to them. He engaged himself not to confer the great offices and dignities of the state but upon such Poles as possessed a considerable property in the different provinces where those employments were to be exercised, and not to name any person to an employment before such employment was become vacant; not to coin any money but with the consent of the prelates and principal nobility; and not to arrest any noble before he was fully convicted, in a regular court of justice, of the crime for which he had been attached.

The following year Jagellon, who was preparing to enjoy the blessings of peace and the fruits of his labours, was attacked with a violent fever, which soon brought him to his end. This prince, who was born an idolater, convinced his subjects, by his example of integrity and piety, that it was conviction alone which determined him to embrace the Christian religion, and not the advantages of a throne. Honour, probity, and fidelity were his favourite virtues: he had courage and bravery
equal

equal to any man, but he often made them give way to policy, which he found was the surest way of accomplishing his designs: he was liberal, and generally directed his generosity to such as were worthy of it: he took every opportunity to do justice to those who were oppressed and ill used, and particularly to inform himself of the misery and distress of his poor subjects, to whom he never failed to send relief. The only amusement that he allowed himself was that of hunting, of which he was passionately fond.

After the death of Jagellon, a great part of the Polish nobility opposed the election of his son Uladislas, who was then but ten years of age, under pretence that he was not yet in a situation to take the reins of government in his hands. Sbignee Olesnicki, bishop of Cracow, who was a friend to the royal family, endeavoured by gentle means to bring over this part of the nobility to favour the election of the young prince; but failing in his attempt, he thought of an expedient which had never before been practised in that kingdom, and which has never since been put in practice: he pretended to put the nomination of a chief of the state to chance, and to cast lots for it; and desired the great marshal of the crown to give notice to all those who refused to give their voices to Uladislas to separate themselves from the partizans of this prince, to the end that their voices might be counted, and a decision made with regard to the greatest number. The rumour that was raised in the assembly in consequence of this measure intimidated the opposite party; they could not agree among themselves, and every person was fearful to be singular in his opinion; and under the apprehension of exposing themselves to the hatred and vengeance of the prince's party, they all remained quiet, and Uladislas was proclaimed king

of Poland without any opposition. When this prince became major he was likewise called to the throne of Hungary by a great part of the nation, who were intimidated by the powerful armaments which the Turks were making against them: hereupon Uladislas conducted a considerable army into Hungary, seized upon the city of Buda, where he was crowned king, notwithstanding the powerful efforts of the opposite party, who pretended to preserve the crown for the posthumous son of whom the queen dowager Elizabeth was delivered: nevertheless the party of this young prince continued to increase, and that of Uladislas was ready to be crushed; when the king of Poland assembled all the Polish nobility who appeared to be the most devoted to his service, and addressed them in the following manner: “Was it thus,” said he, “that you proposed to serve me
“when you chose me to be your king? I am just now returned
“from fighting against your enemies, who were masters of your
“frontiers, and you are raising me up others, who are more
“dangerous, in the bosom of your kingdom. Must I absolutely
“destroy you to bring you to be submissive to legal government,
“and must I be obliged to hold by force of arms what I should
“not choose to grant to the general demand of all your fellow-
“citizens? I own I had some reason to be constantly upon my
“guard against that apparent unanimity which led them to
“submit themselves to my laws. I know the men; they only
“appeared to be unanimous in order to have the opportunity afterwards of disuniting themselves from the majority of their fellow-
“citizens; but should I wait the general defection of a people,
“who by their cries and their groans obliged me to have compassion upon their sufferings; and at a time too, when one of
“my provinces was ready to be torn from my states, and engaged
“me to succour it?—Except you grant me succours at this
“time,

“ time, I must abandon you to all the dangers which threaten
“ you from abroad, and to all the evils which you are ready to
“ draw upon your own heads. If I was really in a situation to
“ preserve you against the violence of your own passions, can I
“ equally save you from the hands of the Infidels? I will now
“ go and fight those barbarians with a people almost exhausted
“ by a civil war, with men stained with the blood of their rela-
“ tions, brothers, and those of their fellow-citizens, who had
“ the glory and interest of their nation at heart. I would not
“ have you imagine that I am fearful of this sultan of the
“ Turks, this Amuzath, who appears so terrible to you. If
“ you are of the same opinion, unite yourselves, acknowledge
“ your master, follow me, and notwithstanding the apparent
“ weakness of our forces, I will answer for the conquest of
“ your enemies; but if you hesitate to return to your duty, you
“ must not be astonished if I leave you, and endeavour to find
“ more faithful subjects.”

That noble boldness, which characterizes this discourse, re-
animated the party of Uladislas, who supported him with various
successes till the death of Elizabeth queen dowager of Hungary.
This princess, who had a resolution above the greatest number
of her sex, when she found herself drawing near her end,
signed a peace with Uladislas, who now being sole master of
Hungary, and having subdued the Lithuanians, who by the
intrigues of Casimir his brother had revolted, turned all his forces
against the Turkish sultan, over whom he gained such signal ad-
vantages that he obliged him to make peace. The Christians
took an oath to observe this famous treaty upon the Evangelists,
and the Turks swore upon the alcoran of Mahomet. The
articles of the peace were faithfully observed by the latter; but
the

the pope truly disapproved of this proceeding, and gave a dispensation to the imprudent Uladislas to break his oath, and to take up arms against those reputed Infidels. Very soon afterwards the two armies met near Varna, and a smart engagement ensued, where the king of Poland, as a just recompence for his perjury and credulity, was killed in the field of battle.

When we reflect upon the prostitution that was made of the Christian religion in these days by the court of Rome and the pretended fathers of the Christian church, and as well of the scandal to the inhabitants of Asia, Africa, and America by those who called themselves the teachers of this religion, it must fill every thinking person with horror: a religion that was first propagated by the God of peace and love, and whose principal characteristics are charity, unity, humility, and brotherly love, was ordered by the popes to be propagated by fire and sword. Jesus Christ ordered his followers to forgive their greatest enemies, and to avoid giving offence to any man; but the Romish clergy, vindictive to the last degree, forbade their followers to keep any promises, or even oaths, that were made to those who were not of their way of thinking, and instead of endeavouring to bring them over to observe the true dictates of the Christian church by their edifying doctrines, and by letting their light so shine before men that they might see their good works, and glorify their Father who is in heaven, they ordered them to be extirpated from the face of the earth, and their habitations to be burnt up.

Uladislas, who at the age of twenty-one was become one of the greatest generals of his age, and who to all the virtues of a hero joined all the amiable qualities necessary to
I make

make a great and a good king, fell a sacrifice to the wickedness and tyranny of the Romish clergy, who likewise gave the most pernicious example to the heathen world. Well may the Turks, conscious of their fidelity and strict observance of the moral laws, exult in the greatness of their prophet, and declare the Christians to be a sect of infamous, perjured, and abandoned wretches, who disregard and reject all the good principles of the prophet of Nazareth, and retain only the name of being his followers.

After the death of this young king, Casimir his brother, who was already duke of Lithuania, thought that he might seize the crown of Poland, or at least receive it upon his own terms; and therefore he declared to the Polish nobility, that he would not accept their crown but with the conditions that the Lithuanians should in future be independent of Poland, and that the republic should restore them the province of Podolia and some duchies: however the firmness of the Poles to support their rights and privileges soon disconcerted all the projects of Casimir, and he feigned a compliance; but scarce had he mounted the throne, when at a diet which was held at Lublin he again laid open his pretensions, and demanded the independence of Lithuania. In vain did they represent to him that Podolia had been conquered from the Tartars, and that all the revenues of Lithuania were not sufficient to re-pay the Poles the sums which they had expended in fortifying Kaminiac and other places in this province. The king would not listen to any of their reasons; whereupon one of the senators rose in the assembly and observed, “That it
“ could not be for the interest of the Lithuanians to solicit the
“ Poles to break an union from which they drew so many ad-
“ vantages. Is it not to us,” said he, “that they owe their
“ nobility,

“ nobility, their liberty, and all their privileges? What interest can they have to break the treaties which they ought themselves to force us to keep, if we were ever capable of breaking them?”

Casimir always insisted upon the liberty of the Lithuanians, but the Poles would not give up any of their rights; and at length carried their resentment so far that they told the king, “ They could no longer acknowledge the authority which they had confided to him, and that he had only one method left to preserve it, or rather to retake it, which was to engage himself by an oath never to attempt any thing against the liberties and privileges of the nation.”—To such a height had the Polish nobility carried their independence even in those days.

In the year 1455, Sbignee Olefnicki, bishop of Cracow, who has been already often mentioned, was the first Pole who was honoured with the Roman purple. If we except that ambition and thirst of power which characterize the Romish clergy, this bishop was in every other respect a very decent man, and was made a cardinal by three popes successively; but this new dignity was the cause of much trouble in the republic. The archbishop of Gnesna, primate of Poland, disputed the precedency with the cardinal-bishop; and after many debates, and even some bloodshed, it was decided, that wherever the cardinal and the archbishop should meet, whether in the diets or whether in the council, the latter should give the right hand to the former; but at the same time it was enacted that no Polish prelates should in future solicit a cardinal's hat without the permission of the king and of the nobility.

The following year the Prussians, who were dreadfully oppressed by the tyranny of the Teutonic order, put themselves under the protection of the king of Poland; and Casimir received the homages of his new subjects at Thorn; whereupon the knights of this order raised a great army to force the Prussians to return again under their obedience, and beat the forces of Casimir near Marienbourg; but the garrison of that important fortress, who had not been paid for some time before, gave it up to the king of Poland for the sum of 470,000 florins, and this purchase was of more service to the nation than four victories.

While Casimir led his forces into Prussia against the Knights of the Teutonic order, the Lithuanians revolted and seized upon Podolia. Casimir, it is true, had heretofore proposed this project, but those people betrayed him as well as the Poles, and wanted to give themselves a new sovereign, though this prince still gave them the preference, ungrateful as they were. Casimir was not at all beloved by the Poles, who imputed to him all the bad success which they had met with in Prussia: he was even afraid that they had formed a design to depose him, and full of this idea he would not appear at the diet of Petrikow without such a strong guard, as was capable of imposing silence upon the seditious. However, when the nobles of the palatinate of Cracow saw that the king was attended with such an armed force, they likewise armed themselves, so that the town resembled a plain where two armies were drawn up, and only wanted the signal to engage. After the several parties had gone through some trifling matters in the first session of the diet, John Rythwienki, Starost of Sendomi, addressed the king in the name of the nobility, and reproached him with having been the cause of all the disorders that troubled the republic, of the relaxation of

VOL. II. 3 L justice,

justice, and of the enormity of the taxes, with which both the nobles and the farmers were loaded; and afterwards raising his voice, he asked the king, “In what consisted the merit of the
 “Lithuanians, that they should be preferred to us, and that
 “being subjects of the crown of Poland, but proud of the support which they receive from you, they would cease to have
 “us for masters, and would even make us their vassals? They
 “have betrayed your ancestors, and even yourself, and yet
 “you love them. Reflect a little upon what they have always
 “been, and upon what we are. Was it not we who drew the
 “king your father from the obscurity in which he lived in a
 “barbarous country, and made him known to all the world
 “by the splendour of his victories? And reflect a moment upon
 “the immense sums which these victories cost us. Reflect likewise upon the blood and treasure which we expended to place
 “your brother upon the throne of Hungary. And to whom
 “do you give the glory of commanding us, as well as that
 “which you acquired against the Knights of the Teutonic
 “order? Is this the recompence that you would give us for our
 “services, and is this what we may hereafter expect from a
 “submission to your laws?” This spirited harangue had the desired effect; the king desisted from his pretensions in favour of Lithuania, and the business of the diet was afterwards carried on without any opposition.

In the year 1466 the Knights of the Teutonic order, intimidated by the irreparable losses which they had sustained, entered into a treaty of peace with the Poles, which terminated that cruel war that had ravaged this kingdom for so many years, by which they restored to the king and to the republic of Poland the duchy of Pomerania, and the districts of Culm and of Milhalow,
 I which

which had been dismembered therefrom for near 180 years: they likewise ceded to the Poles the cities of Dantzic, of Marienbourg, and of Elbing, and all that territory which is now called Polish Prussia, and obliged themselves to do homage for the other part of Prussia which they held of the king and of the republic. And thus this terrible war was terminated which continued twelve years, which cost the Prussians a million of florins (an immense sum in those days) the Knights of the Teutonic order 1,500,000, and the Poles more three millions of florins: moreover before this war began they counted 21,000 villages in Prussia; and when the war ended, there were only 3013 remaining which had escaped the fire and the horrors of the war. It was likewise calculated that the Poles had lost 300,000 men in a number of little battles that were fought during this period.

Can we then sufficiently admire the astonishing effrontery of the late manifesto of Potzdam, calculated to make out an ancient and a legal claim which the marquisses of Brandenburg had to the provinces in question, when all the Polish and the best of the German historians positively affirm that the family of Brandenburg never had directly or indirectly any pretensions to Prussia, or to any other part of those territories, till the beginning of the sixteenth century, when Albert of Brandenburg was grand master of the Teutonic order?

The war with Prussia had absorbed the greatest part of the revenues of Poland, and had so loaded the state with debts, that there was a necessity for several new taxes to pay them off; but as the nation resolved to inquire into the mode that was proposed to pay this debt, as well as to regulate the manner of raising

those taxes, this gave rise to a considerable alteration in the Polish government : before this time all the Polish nobility who had voices in the diet generally attended it ; and as many of the members were not only turbulent, but extremely ignorant of the different matters they were to decide, great confusion and disorder arose from such a mixed multitude.

Whereupon it was now decided that every Palatinate should send their deputies to the diet, who were called Nonces, and who were invested with full powers to enter into all the details of government. The diet which was convoked upon this new plan, was very peaceable, was of short duration, and established good order in the administration : though the most judicious Poles continue to this day to be of the opinion that this establishment of Nonces has since been more prejudicial than useful to the state. These Nonces have since esteemed their body as the first order of the republic ; and in the place of regarding themselves as the intermediate power between the chief and the senate, or the first members of the state, they often came into the diet only to manifest their independency, to oppose the most salutary designs of the prince, and to contradict the advice of the senate.

Casimir reigned till the year 1492, and died very little regretted : this prince, who was weak and indolent, had no ambition, but was a lover of flattery and false glory : he thought he could never dishonour himself ; he was liberal by ostentation, but avaricious by nature ; his devotion was mere grimace ; he passed his time in a continued scene of pompous idleness, and during his administration Poland owed her successes more to a concurrence of circumstances than to his abilities.

After

After the death of this prince, John Albert his third son was advanced to the throne of Poland. Albert had shewn great bravery in a war which the Poles waged with the Tartars, and had thereby gained the affection of the people, whose general voice contributed more towards his election, than the consent of the Senate and of the Nonces, and disconcerted all the partizans of his brothers Alexander duke of Lithuania and Uladislas king of Hungary, as well as those of John duke of Mazovia, as of the ancient house of the Piaſts. We find nothing extraordinary, or even worth recording during the reign of this prince till the year 1500, when, threatened by the Moscovites, who would seize upon the duchy of Smolenko, he solicited the succours of Schah Matei, Kan of the Bulgarian Tartars. Schah Matei, according to the custom of those Tartars, immediately dipped the point of his sabre in water, and took an oath to join the Polish army with 100,000 men upon the banks of the Dnieper. The Tartar prince kept his word, but John Albert did not appear, which gave the Tartars a very bad idea of the Polish faith.

The following year John Albert was attacked with an apoplexy and died. The people were extremely deceived in their opinion of this prince's activity and bravery, as his whole reign was only distinguished by base and weak actions; an indolence and indifference were the distinguishing characteristics of his life; he easily received every kind of impression that was given him, as he had not sufficient discernment to distinguish between good and bad counsels; he was incapable of reflection, and nourished in his prejudices, without any taste or any principles: it is true a great part of his faults ought to be attributed to the infamous conduct of his governor, who gave him no instruction, in order that he might govern the state under the
name

name of a weak and ignorant master. The Poles were now obliged more by their interest than by policy to elect Alexander the fourth son of Casimir, who was already duke of Lithuania, to the throne. Either they were to receive him for their master, or to see Lithuania separated for ever from Poland.

Alexander agreed when he took the reins of government in his hands, “ That from that time forward the Poles and the Lithuanians should be one people, under the same king, and under the same government ; that this king should be always elected in Poland ; that the Nonces and the great nobles of Lithuania should concur in the election ; that the two nations should have the same prerogatives, counsels, interests, and the same coins ; that they should have every thing in common among them, their losses and advantages, and their good and ill success ; but that each should preserve their courts of law, and the forms of their judicial proceedings.” And thus was the famous project of Uladislas Jagellon fully confirmed in the year 1501.

I have already made mention of Schah Matei, the Kan of the Bulgarian Tartars, who came with a powerful army to assist the Poles, who waited a considerable time for their joining him upon the banks of the Dnieper, and at length not only found himself deceived by the Poles, his pretended allies, but attacked by the Tartars of the Crim : he was himself abandoned by a great part of his army, who joined the enemy ; was then obliged to support an unequal combat for several days, and at length, after having lost almost all his army, and wandered for some time through the deserts of Podolia, he came to Kiovia, where he was arrested

arrested by the palatine of that province, and sent to Wilna, to wait for the king's orders.

This unhappy prince was kept in prison till the year 1505, when he was conducted to Radomsko, where he addressed the following discourse to the king before the whole senate: “ I shall take care not to reproach you with bitterness for the insults which you have shewn me, because this would be the means of meriting them; my losses, my captivity, and your own conscience will sufficiently explain your injustice. Was it only to destroy me that you drew me so far into this country? I came to assist you when you were in distress, and confided in your promises and your oaths: I have lost on your account my subjects, my troops, my glory, and my nation; and how am I recompensed? Is there any other nation in the world that would treat an enemy with so much barbarity as you have treated a friend and an ally? But those who break their word with God, will not hesitate to break it with men.” When lifting up his hands towards heaven, which he called to witness the ingratitude of the king and of the republic of Poland, “ Oh heaven,” said he, “ thou wilt one day revenge me of the injustice which they have done me.”

Schah Matei afterwards insisted upon the obligation which they were under of setting him free, and of conducting him safe into his own country; and promised in acknowledgment to raise a new army, and to conduct them against the enemies of Poland: “ It may be,” said he, “ that you will hesitate to give me my liberty, through fear that I may one day revenge myself for the injuries which I have received; but learn to know me; I have no longer any thing to re-
“venge

“venge myself of, if you repent of your injustices, as there are
“only actions which are truly noble, generous, and humane,
“which make a lasting impression upon my heart.”

The king and a great many of the nobility of Poland, degenerated as they were, would have set this noble spirited Tartar free; and by an excess of kindness, have endeavoured to make him forget the unkind treatment which he had received, but the clergy opposed this measure, and observed that they ought never to keep any promises, or even oaths, with people who were not of their religion.

When we reflect upon the honest and noble behaviour of this Tartar, and upon the wretched, mean, and base behaviour of the Poles, not to say any thing of their perjury, it will fill us with astonishment: but the latter were acting under the direction of their spiritual pastors, who desired that Schah Matei might be retained: they afterwards endeavoured to deceive him; he attempted to escape out of their hands by flight; but was afterwards retaken, and guarded more strictly than ever; and although he never could bring Alexander and the Polish clergy to act as honest men, he at least had the consolation to make them blush by his integrity, firmness, and courage.

The following year the Tartars attacked Poland with a powerful army, and made great ravages; but the Polish army, commanded by the king's favourite Gliniki, gained a complete victory over them: in this memorable battle the Tartars left 20,000 men upon the place of action; the Poles took 23,000 horses, and delivered 40,000 of their countrymen, whom the former were leading into slavery.

The

The king received the news of this victory some minutes only before his death: his eyes immediately flowed with tears of joy; he lifted up his hands towards heaven, and expired soon after.

This prince, who had but weak abilities, pretended to form great projects, the weight of which was too powerful for him: he was fearful, inquiet, bigotted, and credulous, and suffered himself to be governed by interested and wretched flatterers; he even hesitated to make use of that natural judgment and reflection which is inherent in all mankind, and to reject the counsels of those false and avaricious people: he was pompous without magnificence, and prodigal without discernment; as he even gave away the property which was annexed to the crown; he was insensible of the real wants of the state, and yet made it a necessity to satisfy the miserable wants of a base and dishonourable voluptuousness. After the death of this prince, his brother Sigismond, who was already elected duke of Lithuania by the nobility of that province, was elected king of Poland without any opposition, or even any division of the voices.

The former part of the reign of this prince was not distinguished by any particular action worthy of our attention, or which contributed in any respect to make an alteration in the government of this kingdom; but in the year 1524 we find that he concluded a very remarkable treaty, which at that time was undoubtedly prejudicial to the interests of Poland, and which has since been much more so.

Albert of Brandenbourg, who had been a canon of the church of Cologne, and afterwards served in the emperor's army, where

he distinguished himself so much that he was chosen grand master of the Teutonic order; and fearing that the king and the republic of Poland, either through interest or through zeal, would seize upon that part of Prussia which had been ceded by the last treaty to the knights of this order, he proposed to Sigismund to divide the territories which appertained to the order in common: this proposition was listened to by the king of Poland, as coming from his sister's son; and by the treaty which they concluded in consequence of it, it was agreed, that "In future all the towns, castles, and territories in Prussia, ceded to the Knights of the Teutonic order, by the treaty made between the king Casimir the Fourth, and the grand master Lewis Eclichausen, should appertain only to Albert; and that they should pass to his heir male, and in default thereof to his brothers; and moreover that these latter might dispose of them in favour of their issue male; but in case that their posterity came to be extinguished, then those towns, castles, and territories should return under the dominion of the king and of the republic of Poland; that each of these princes should be obliged to do homage for those territories to the king, and to the republic; and should not be at liberty to sell, to alienate, to engage, or to dismember them without the consent of the diet; and that there should always be an appeal from the judgments of these princes to the principal tribunal of the kingdom; and moreover as members of the state, they should be entitled to have seats in all the public assemblies, where they should occupy the first place near the king."

This is the original title by which the family of Brandenburg held that part of Prussia for which they took the title of king; but

but with what legality or justice the world will judge from the perusal of the terms of this treaty.

Sigismund was in many respects a great prince, but he acted a very imprudent and impolitic part in suffering the turbulent and tyrannical marquisses of Brandenbourg to have any footing in his country: he was likewise a great general; as during the whole course of his reign, while he commanded their army, the Poles were victorious against all their enemies: in fact, such was the love of the people for Sigismund that, without any regard to the constitution of the republic, they named his son Sigismund Augustus his successor to the throne, and crowned him during his father's life-time.

I cannot better describe the character of Sigismund than by setting forth the lessons which he gave to his son some time before his death, and which are transmitted down to us with great exactness by several of the best of the Polish historians. “ My
 “ son,” said this great king to the prince his successor, “ it is
 “ some time since that I have seen with secret pleasure all the
 “ hearts of the people turned towards you; and I doubt not
 “ but that you will one day fulfill all their hopes. You are
 “ not ignorant that Poland owes much to us; but learn from
 “ me to-day, that we owe much more to the Poles: they pre-
 “ ferred us and our ancestors to princes who were much supe-
 “ rior to us by their property, by their power, by their birth,
 “ and by their talents; and elected us to be their chiefs and their
 “ masters: and in the course of a century and half, how
 “ often have they shown us particular marks of their zeal; they
 “ thought that you in particular was worthy of their voices;
 “ you was not in a capacity to merit them. And is there then

“ any thing so difficult, any thing so great or so dangerous, that
“ you ought not to undertake for their repose and for their
“ glory? You will satisfy them without doubt, if you will not
“ affect to govern as a sovereign a people whose liberties make
“ them the arbitrators of your conduct, and the judges even of
“ your virtues. You must not attempt to lord it over them, except
“ by the wisdom of your counsels, nor to order them any thing
“ but by the authority of the laws which they have made for
“ themselves; you must not attempt to command them, if I
“ may make use of such an expression, but by obeying them;
“ for it is only taking care to preserve their privileges, that you
“ may acquire some power over them. Descend towards them
“ without demeaning yourself; flatter their ambition, without
“ letting them perceive your own; gain their confidence, and
“ they will abandon all their privileges to you; behave towards
“ them in such a manner as to make them think that they have
“ nothing to fear from you, and from that moment they will
“ only fear for you, and you will have no reason to fear them.
“ You must have no other enemies but theirs; but you must
“ think less of defending them, than of making them happy;
“ be faithful to your promises, equitable in your judgments,
“ magnificent in your gifts, and obliging even in your refusals;
“ reduce them to the situation of not setting any limits to your
“ power, when it is applied to promote the public utility and
“ felicity.”

During the reign of this amiable prince the cities became flourishing, the number of the fortresses was increased, and several sumptuous public edifices were raised. The arts and sciences which he introduced into the kingdom softened and polished in some measure the manners of the nobility; the farmers
were

were relieved from oppression, agriculture was recommended and protected, and abundance was spread throughout all the provinces of the kingdom.

This prince died in the year 1548, in the eighty-second year of his age, sincerely and universally regretted by all his subjects: he was master of his own ambition, which he restrained, and knew how to make it subservient to the interests of his people, which always appeared to be the great object of his policy. More jealous of the happiness of the nation, than of the glory of acquiring new kingdoms, as he refused the crowns of Sweden, of Hungary, and of Bohemia: he was courageous, but not rash; bold but not presumptuous; firm but not opinionated; he corrected the turbulent humour of the Polish nobility by respecting their privileges, and gained the esteem and confidence of his neighbours, less by his power, and the real force of his states, than by the exact probity with which he fulfilled all his engagements.

Sigismund Augustus, who was elected and crowned king during his father's life-time, mounted the throne without any opposition. This prince married first the archduchess Elizabeth, daughter of Ferdinand king of the Romans; but as he soon became a widower, he fell violently in love with a young widow, the daughter of George Radziwil, and as he could not seduce her, he resolved to marry her, which he did without the consent of the king, or of the senate, which were necessary in those days, and without any other witnesses than the contracting parties. While he was passing some days with his new bride, a courier brought the news of the death of his father, on which he hid the courier for three days, and during this time he declared his marriage,

marriage, and gave orders to all the Palatines of Lithuania, the habitation of the Radziwil family, and all the great officers of the state, to acknowledge the princess as their queen.

The news of the marriage of Sigismond Augustus, contracted without the participation and consent of the republic, set the whole nation against him, and was the principal object of the deliberations of the diet of Petrikow. Several of the Nonces there observed, that “As the state was in want of proper alliances, the kings ought to regulate themselves thereby, and not by following their blind passion to ally themselves with such courts as were jealous of their people’s happiness, or with poor or degraded houses. And what advantage,” said they, “are we to expect from the alliance in question? What succours, what property, what resources, can such a person bring to the state? the widow of a subject, whose birth, distinguished as it may be, is much inferior to the rank to which she imagines she may raise herself, and where, by your concurrence, she hopes to support herself.”

Upon which the diet decided that the king ought to join with them to dissolve the marriage, and to contract another, which might be more honourable and advantageous to the nation. Upon which the king addressed the diet in the following terms: “Permit me,” said he with great gentleness, “that I may fulfill my engagement, and with that probity which you would wish should be always an essential part of my character. Attached to the republic, I would not wound its authority, and having pledged my faith to my wife, I will die sooner than betray her confidence; if I have acted contrary to your laws, if I have wounded your privileges, I will endeavour to redress the latter, by confessing before you all that I have
I “been

“ been wanting to ; and I will offer you a means to re-
“ establish your rights, by desiring you to give your consent to
“ my marriage ; as it cannot be dissolved, you have no other
“ method to take but to approve of it. In that case my ho-
“ nour will not suffer, and you will lose nothing of you rigid
“ liberties, upon which you so much glorify yourselves.” This
plain and reasonable discourse, far from calming the minds of
this people, served only to irritate them. The archbishop of
Gnesna observed, that “ If it was a sin for a man to put away
“ his legal wife, every Pole ought, for the good of the state,
“ to take a part of it upon his conscience.” Another learned
bishop spoke much for the dissolution of the marriage, and to
give the more weight to his opinion he cited the famous passage
of Euripides, “ That if we were at any time authorized to
“ offer any violation to justice, it should be particularly in the
“ exercise of the sovereign authority.” Hereupon the debates
began to be very warm in the diet, but the king resolved to
hear no more of them ; the senators threw themselves at his feet,
but he shook them off ; one of them, with tears in his eyes, at-
tempted to speak, but the king commanded him to be silent.
Then the palatine of Bizescia rose up, and with a degree of firm-
ness which almost bordered upon a defiance, addressed the king
in the following manner : “ Has your majesty forgotten what sort
“ of men you pretend to command ? We are Poles, and the
“ Poles you know take as much pleasure in honouring such of
“ their kings as respect their laws, as in opposing the haughti-
“ nesses of those who despise those laws : take care that by
“ breaking through your oaths, you do not force us to break
“ ours likewise : the king your father took our advice on most
“ occasions, and it depends upon us to act in such a manner,
“ that in future you shall be obliged to listen to that of a re-
“ public,”

“ public, of which you seem to forget that you are but the first
“ citizen.” Nothing was capable of shaking the firmness and
resolution of the king, nor the obstinacy of the Poles: the diet
was dissolved, and if the Tartars had not at this time attacked
and ravaged some part of the kingdom, this spark would in all
probability have caused such a flame as might have proved the
means of dethroning Sigismund Augustus.

In the year 1556 Sigismund took advantage of the troubles of
Livonia to submit this rich province to the dominion of Poland:
he compelled the grand master of the Teutonic order, under
whose subjection this province was at that time, to sign a treaty,
whereby he declared himself to be a vassal of the crown, and
moreover obliged himself not to make any alliance with the
Russians, but with the consent of the republic.

In the year 1561 Godhard Kettler, grand master of this order,
not being in a situation to support himself against the formida-
ble power of the Russians, rendered Livonia to the crown of Po-
land, on condition that he should possess Courland and Semigall,
under the title of duchy, for which he and his successors in per-
petuity should do homage to the king and to the republic. Ket-
tler, when he signed this treaty, gave up his cross and the seal
of his order, put the Poles in possession of the town and of the
castle of Riga, and was proclaimed hereditary duke of Courland
and of Semigall. Many historians have been much surprized at
the facility with which this grand master divested himself of a
great part of his territories; but following the example of the
famous Albert of Brandenburg, and having like him changed
his opinion respecting religion, to follow the doctrines of Luther,
he chose rather to divide his provinces with an ally powerful
enough

enough to support him against his enemies, than to see them attacked on every side by a powerful neighbour.

Towards the end of the year 1568, Albert Tredeni of Brandenburg, having succeeded his father Albert duke of Prussia, came to Lublin to demand of the king and of the republic of Poland the investiture of his duchy; he was received before the diet, and promised the king Sigismond to be faithful and obedient to him as his natural and hereditary lord; whereupon the king gave him a white standard, on which a black eagle was painted, which had on its stomach the two letters S. A. (Sigismond Augustus); and when he had taken the oaths, the king girded on a two-edged sword to the duke's side, and passed a chain of gold about his neck as a mark of knighthood. Considering the nature of this investiture, and the circumstances which attended it, is it not astonishing that the family of Brandenburg, 150 years after, should have the assurance to take the title of king for this little territory, which was no more than a fief of the crown of Poland? and that in our days a Hohensollern, with a degree of persuasion peculiar to some military geniuses, should attempt by a manifesto to persuade mankind, that the whole territories of Prussia legally appertained for several hundred years past to his family?

The following year the great affair of the union of Lithuania with Poland, such as it is at present, was finally settled. By this agreement both states are to concur equally in the election of the kings; and no person can be king of Poland who is not at the same time duke of Lithuania. The king of Poland renounced for himself and for his children all the rights which his ancestors had left him upon this duchy, and consented that it

should no longer be regarded as an appendage of his family. In the year 1571, Sigismund Augustus died; and though he had been guilty of many irregularities in the early part of his reign, was much lamented by all his people. This prince, who was born with great virtues and some vices, knew how to follow his father's instructions, and to engage the esteem and love of his subjects: he was an enemy to flattery, and was even highly offended with any person who attempted it: he was slow in forming his projects, but very prompt in executing them: he reasoned very well upon most matters; and to draw people over to his opinion, he often made use of soft insinuations, which made others with whom he conversed believe that he gave into their way of thinking: he was bold and enterprising in war, and often exposed himself to dangers when he thought he could thereby pass on to victory; but on the other hand, he likewise knew how to avoid them when he saw that no good consequences were likely to follow. At a time when ignorance appeared to be one of the characteristics of grandeur, he protected and encouraged the arts and sciences in his kingdom. With this prince the male issue of the family of the Jagellons was extinguished, who had occupied the throne of Poland near 200 years.

The throne of Poland being now vacant, several candidates appeared to be elected to this high and important dignity; among whom were the archduke Ernest, son of the emperor Maximilian the Second; the king of Sweden and his son; duke Albert of Prussia; and the elector of Saxony; but by one of the capricious acts of dame Fortune this crown was reserved for Henry duke of Anjou, brother to Charles the Ninth king of France. Certain it is, that the court of France had at that time no connection with Poland, and except two or three who were

were in the secret, thought very little of giving a master to this state. A Polish gentleman who was at Paris, and who was admitted to some familiarities with Catherine of Medicis, was the first to whom the proposition was made by that artful and intriguing queen, who loaded him with riches, and by him sent several rich presents to some of the principal clergy and nobility of Poland. When he returned into his own country, these presents, and the report which he made of the great qualities of the duke of Anjou, pleaded so much in his favour, that when Sigismund Augustus died, a part of the nobility used their utmost endeavours to place this prince upon the throne, and he was elected notwithstanding all the efforts of the partizans of the archduke of Austria. It was at the diet which was convened for the election of this prince that we first find the name of Dissidents mentioned; a name which was given to all who dissented from the Roman Catholic religion, as it was then practised in this kingdom, if such a scene of horrors and abuses as were used by the most abandoned clergy that ever disgraced human society may be called a religion: it was at this diet likewise that the act called the *Pacta Conventa*, or the written conventions that the kings of Poland make with the republic, and which hath since been established as a fundamental law of the kingdom, were first formed. Before this time the kings of Poland agreed tacitly or verbally to govern their subjects according to the laws and customs of the state; but the last article of these conventions signed by Henry of Anjou expresses, that if the prince shall break any of the engagements which he has entered into with his subjects and sworn to keep, the oaths of fidelity which the subjects have taken shall from that moment be dissolved and regarded as null. All the acts which have been signed since this æra by the kings of Poland when they came to the throne, have

had this for a model, and this last article in particular has never been omitted. Before this æra the Poles regarded their kingdom as partly elective and partly hereditary, but since this time the crown has always been supposed, even by the laws of the state, to be entirely elective; and this people have always endeavoured to preserve the right of deposing their kings if they break their engagements.

However, notwithstanding Henry signed this formidable act, the wicked characters of Catherine de Medicis and of her adherents were so well known at this time throughout all Europe, that all the Diffidents and a great of the Polish nobility formed a kind of an association against this prince; and when the day appointed for his coronation arrived, and the primate had begun this grand ceremony, Tirley, the great marshal of the crown, rose up, and addressed the Poles who were of his party in the following manner: “It was in vain then,” said he to them, “that you and I flattered
“ourselves, even to this day, with being free; but they play
“with our privileges, and the greatest part of our fellow-citizens,
“by an infamous and perfidious silence, condemn themselves to
“an eternal slavery. Let them early ply their necks to the yoke
“of slavery, as they are not worthy of liberty; but for us, my
“friends, who have at the same time our laws and our religion
“to support, let us shew the world by our boldness or by our
“death, how we are disposed to oppose tyranny. You cannot
“have forgotten the just and equitable demands which were made
“of the king by the almost unanimous desire of the whole
“nation for the free exercise of the reformed religion in the
“kingdom, and which by his ambassador were consented to:
“do you imagine that we ought to forget them, because
“the king has rejected them and broke his promises? What
“baseness.

“ baseness, what shame for us that we have suffered them so
“ long? For my part, I am determined to bear it no longer;
“ and if the king will not immediately accept the conditions
“ which he has granted, and swear to observe them, from this
“ moment I will oppose his coronation.”

Such an audacious act would in all probability have been followed by a bloody battle, if the French ambassador, who was seated near the king, had not addressed himself immediately to the archbishop of Gnesna in the following manner: “ The king
“ orders you to begin the ceremony for which we are here
“ assembled, and his majesty, with the senate, will regulate the
“ rest.” This tone of firmness and of confidence silenced the insulting clamours of the other party, and the ceremony was finished without any disturbance. However, as Henry still refused to fulfill his promises (indeed they were not made with the intention to be fulfilled, as he was at that time in the plot with the rest of his amiable family to cut off all the Protestants from the face of the earth) he found his situation in Poland very disagreeable, and there was the greatest probability that the nation would have soon been plunged in a civil war; but happily for the Poles, Charles the Ninth king of France soon after died, and Henry, who was heir to that crown, quitted Poland in the night with the greatest precipitation. All the Poles who were of his party were filled with amazement and consternation when they heard that Henry had abandoned the kingdom; and they immediately sent the great chamberlain, count Tenczyn, to desire the king to return. Tenczyn joined the king in Silesia, threw himself at his feet, and conjured him to yield to the desire which his subjects expressed to see him; he painted the melancholy situation of the dom, torn to pieces by intestine factions, in the most lively colours,

colours, but all he could say was to no effect; Henry had formed his resolution, and sent back Tenczyn with vague promises to return, and in the mean time to send some wise and prudent ministers, who would watch over the repose of the state.

However the Poles, persuaded that Henry had abandoned their kingdom for ever, declared the throne vacant. The nation was now divided into two parties; the one proclaimed the emperor Maximilian the Second their king, and the other agreed to place the princess Ann Jagellon, sister to Sigismund Augustus, upon the throne, on condition that she shared the sovereign authority with Stephen Battori, prince of Transilvania, whom they designed for her husband. The death of the emperor Maximilian delivered this kingdom from a dangerous enemy, who was preparing to take advantage of the divisions of the kingdom and to assert the rights which one part of the nation had given him; so that in the year 1576 Stephen Battori was proclaimed king of Poland: but as this prince was a stranger, and not supposed to be well enough acquainted with the laws and customs of the state, the diet named sixteen senators, who were always to be near the king, and to assist him with their counsel: this is the origin of the resident senators in this kingdom.

The following year the magistrates of the city of Dantzic, who refused to acknowledge Stephen Battori as king of Poland, were declared rebels to their country, and the city was besieged in form by this prince; but as they afterwards complied, their crime was pardoned, and the king confirmed all their privileges. During this siege Mark Sobieski beat the rebels near the Dirchaw, and pursued their general to a considerable distance, when he overtook him and killed him near the Vistula within the king's
fight;

fight; whereupon Battori observed, "that if he was to risk
" the fate of Poland upon a single combat, as that of Rome
" was formerly done, he would not hesitate to name Mark
" Sobieski for this purpose."

Stephen made a great reformation in the administration of justice and in the internal policy of the kingdom: he established the great tribunal of the crown; all the cases of the nobility of Great Poland were judged at Petrikow, those of the nobles of Little Poland at Lublin; the law-suits of the nobility of Lithuania were judged at a tribunal that was instituted three years after this, which was held six months at Wilna and the other six months at Novogrodek. This prince established a law, which has ever since remained in force, that no commoner of Poland should be ennobled without the consent of the diet: he likewise published several new military orders, re-established the discipline of the Polish cavalry, and formed a new body of troops, which were designed to act against the Tartars, and sent them into the Ukraine, at that time almost a desert country from Bar and Kiow almost to the Black Sea, but which is at present, by the prudence and policy of Battori, filled with well-peopled towns and villages. Till the reign of Stephen Battori the Cossacks had lived in a kind of independence, and, in fact, almost in a state of nature; and supported themselves by hunting, robbing, and plundering: this prince attempted to reduce this turbulent people, to make them subject to proper laws and regulations, and to make them as a kind of rampart for Poland against the Turks and the Tartars: he formed a perpetual militia among this people, granted them great liberties and privileges, permitted them to elect a chief, to build the town of Terechtemirow, and assigned them a considerable extent of country upon the frontiers of the kingdom;
and

and from hence we may date the origin of the form of government which was practised among the Cossacks for more than 120 years, and which subsists, in some measure, to this day.

In the year 1579 Stephen Battori declared war against the Russians, and laid siege to the town of Polock in Lithuania, which was conquered by the latter under the reign of Sigismund the Second.

The Poles took the place after a short siege, and flattered themselves that they should find a very considerable booty in it, but the enemy had the precaution to carry off every thing that was valuable, except the library, in which were found several ancient and interesting manuscripts and the writings of several fathers of the Greek church translated into the Slavonian language by Methodius, apostle of the Slavonians, and by Cyrill his brother, known under the name of Constantine. This library was carried to Wilna, where an academy was founded this year, and confirmed by a bull of pope Gregory the Thirteenth. This same year likewise Godhard Kessler did homage to the king and to the republic of Poland, and received from them the solemn investiture of the duchy of Courland. In the year 1582, a treaty of peace was signed between the Russians and the Poles by the mediation of the pope, whereby the former ceded above thirty fortresses in Livonia and Estonia to the latter, and by that means all their communication with the Baltic sea was cut off; but as the court of Moscow had no idea in those days of the great advantages of a marine and of commerce, this loss was not judged to be of any great consequence.

In the year 1586 the whole kingdom of Poland were greatly afflicted by the loss of Stephen Battori. This just and amiable prince acquired the greatest part of his knowledge and of his virtues in the school of adversity : in the early part of his life he was attached to Ferdinand king of Hungary, and lost his liberty in fighting for him, who repaid his friendship and services with black ingratitude. John prince of Transilvania drew him to his court, and charged him with an important commission to the emperor Maximilian the Second, who arrested him under pretence that he had broken the truce : he was retained three years in prison, during which interval he studied history, conversed with men of genius, and employed all his vacant hours in reading good books ; but, like the great Condé, he would never permit that Cæsar's Commentaries should be read to him. After the death of John, the states of Transilvania elected him unanimously to be their prince, and soon afterwards he was elected king of Poland. This prince was affable, humane, and good-natured to a great degree, and never gave any person reason to fear him, but the enemies of his country : he was a great general, and as prudent as he was brave and intrepid. After his death the kingdom was again divided into two factions ; one of them pretended to have a Piaſt for their king, and the other would give the crown to a stranger : each party supported their sentiments with so much obstinacy, that there was even a division in the senate upon that head ; whereupon the true patriots, to prevent a civil war, elected Sigismund, son of John king of Sweden and of Catherine Jagellon, daughter of Augustus the First, to be their king, while the opposite party proclaimed the archduke Maximilian. The Austrian prince entered Poland with some troops, but he was beaten and obliged to retire into Silesia : soon after Sigismund entered Poland and was crowned king, and afterwards

he followed Maximilian into Germany, who shut himself up in Witzen; the place was besieged and taken, and the unhappy prince was made prisoner; but however he obtained his liberty the following year, on condition that he renounced the title of king.

In the year 1518 the two nephews of the late king Stephen, Andrew and Balthasar Battori, were formally naturalized by a law of the state. Before this time all the strangers who established themselves in this kingdom enjoyed the privileges of natural-born subjects without having any occasion for an act of naturalization; before this time likewise the landed as well as personal property of all the great families was equally divided among all the children of each house respectively, so that the eldest had no advantage over the youngest: but in the year 1589 a law was enacted to alter this order of succession, and to establish a certain right in the eldest child of a family to succeed to the principal landed estate of the family, without dividing it with the younger children, and to prevent it from being charged with any mortgage.

Soon after the Cossacks, who, as I have before mentioned, were living peaceably under a civil government upon the frontiers of Poland, were attacked by a great army of Tartars, who would revenge themselves for the ravages which these robbers had formerly made in their country. These Tartars passed the Dneiper, and came and encamped themselves near Leopold; whereupon the general Zamoyfki was deputed with a body of troops to succour the Cossacks, who were immediately victorious, and drove the enemy out of their territories; but, blinded by their success, they fell into an ambuscade, and were in danger of being

all massacred; they even offered to surrender upon honourable terms. The Kan of the Tartars, who after his first defeat had brought a new army into the field, to animate and encourage his subjects refused treating with them upon any conditions. The Cofacks, driven to despair, exhorted each other mutually to sell their lives dear, and fell with such fury upon the Tartars, that they cut their way through the Tartar army with which they were surrounded, and made such a terrible slaughter, that their enemies betook themselves to flight; their Kan was wounded, and his son, covered with wounds, expired before his eyes: in fact, the Cofacks gained a complete victory. History furnishes us with many examples of this kind: drive an enemy to despair, and you furnish him with new arms to vanquish you.

The following year died Godhard Kettico, duke of Courland; and in a diet that was held soon after, it was decided, that as this prince died without any male issue, Courland should be governed immediately by the king; they likewise settled proper revenues to support the honours and dignity of the crown, as well in Lithuania as in Poland, of which the following are an exact list: The salt works of Cracow, the mines of Olkufz, the custom-houses of the crown and those of the province of Red Russia, the salt-works of Russia, the starosties of Sendomir and of Sambor, the districts of Ozimin and of Medeniec, the customs of Marienbourg, of Rogozno, and of Dirchaw, the customs of Dantzic and of Elbing, of Plocko and of Riga in Lithuania, the customs of Grodno, of Szawle, of Brzesc, of Kobryn, of Mohilow, and of Olita, together with the produce of the coinages and of the public carriages. Many of these articles are annexed to the domain of the crown to this day. The customs of Dantzic are now the property of the magistrates, who pay

the crown of Poland a certain fixed sum yearly as an equivalent for them; and the rich salt-works have lately been usurped by the court of Vienna.

The Cofacks, proud of the protection of the Poles, continued to plunder and depopulate the territories of the Tartars, on which the latter sent deputies to the republic to make complaints against the Cofacks, and to demand reparation for the wrongs which had been done them. The Poles on this made them a present of a great number of sheeps skins; and promised to pay them 20,000 ducats a year to keep them in peace and tranquillity, which gift the Tartars regarded as a tribute.

In the year 1592 the king of Sweden died, and the king of Poland departed immediately from Cracow to take possession of the crown of this kingdom, to which he was the heir. In passing through Dantzic, one of the Poles who was in his train imprudently wounded one of the citizens of that place, which immediately caused a general revolt in the town: the inhabitants shut the gates, armed themselves, advanced some pieces of cannon, and fired several shot against the house where the king was lodged; several Poles were killed; but after some difficulties the minds of the people were quieted, and Sigismund embarked for Stockholm. We may from hence see the abuse which the inhabitants of Dantzic, now grown rich by commerce, made of the liberties and privileges which they had some years before obtained from the Poles in the most submissive manner, and how dangerous it is for a government to entrust too much power to the people without having a proper controul over them: the making the nobility independent, and setting up so many little sovereignties and free states within the territories of this great state, has been the
ruin

ruin of Poland, and will inevitably bring this once powerful kingdom to its final destruction.

In the year 1594 Sigismond was crowned king of Sweden at Upsal; and after having confirmed the privileges of the nation, he entrusted the government to his uncle Charles duke of Sudermania, the father of Gustavus Adolphus: but before he could settle this affair and his plan of government, he had many debates with the senate; the former pretended to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion; and the latter insisted that the practice of this religion should be totally prohibited; and the king's authority was obliged to give way to the unanimous opinion of the senate, of the states, and of the multitude.

Sigismond left Sweden without being able to extinguish the fire which his proposition had raised in all parts of the kingdom, and immediately the states assembled at Suder Cöeping, where Charles of Sudermania was not only established regent of the kingdom by the general voice of the people, but it was likewise enacted that this prince should not divest himself of this important dignity on any account whatever. Highly dissatisfied with the conduct of Charles and of the states, Sigismond made several efforts to re-assume his authority, but he was opposed by all the partizans of his uncle, and matters were at length carried to such a height, that their differences could not be decided but by arms. Sigismond pleaded his sovereign rights, and Charles the love of the people: the two rivals met at Stegeborg; their armies engaged, and Sigismond was vanquished; whereupon the decision of their differences was remitted to the diet at Stockholm, which, after having in vain demanded that Sigismond should come and reside in Sweden, or at least send his son

son there to be educated in the Lutheran religion, decided that duke Charles should be king. Sigismond made some bitter complaints of this unjust proceeding to the diet at Warsaw; but he could not persuade the Poles to enter into a war of which the cause appeared to them, if not contrary, at least entirely foreign to the interests of the republic.

In the year 1604 a bloody war broke out in Livonia in consequence of the unhappy differences of these two kings, when this rich province was laid waste; and during five years the armies of the two parties were sometimes victors and sometimes vanquished. However the Poles, supported by the troops of the duke of Courland, at length raised the siege of Riga and drove the Swedes out of Livonia; but either they did not know how to make a proper use of the advantages which they had gained, or they feared, by pursuing their victories, to lend their forces to increase the royal power, which they imagined would be dangerous to their liberty. Moreover the Poles were at this time much dissatisfied with Sigismond's conduct, who was about to marry an Austrian princess the sister of his former wife; and they moreover supposed that the king had designed to quit the crown of Poland in favour of his son Uladislas.

The following year the kingdom of Poland was in the greatest confusion on account of the differences between the king and the nobility; the latter associated to oblige the king to reform the enormous abuses which had been introduced into the administration of the public affairs: all who did not enter into this league were declared enemies of their country. The nobles armed their vassals, and the king assembled his troops and marched against the discontented party: the two armies were ready to engage,
and

and one citizen to assassinate another, when the senators desired to have a conference with the chiefs of the anti-royalists; who at length consented to wait quietly the decision of the diet of Warsaw, on condition that the king would not assist there in person. However this treaty did not take place; and notwithstanding Sigismond used every conciliating method to pacify the people, the chiefs of the rebels, in a kind of council which they held, had the assurance to declare the throne vacant, and the adherents of their legal prince traitors to their country. The turbulent Radzivil of Lithuania had even the audacity to convoke the states of the kingdom to Warsaw to elect a new king. These troubles continued during the whole reign of Sigismond, and only ceased with his death.

In the year 1610 the Poles besieged Smolensko, and their famous general Zolkiewski beat the Russian army which came to succour the place, and pursued them to Moscow, which he likewise took; and as they had just then deposed Basil Suiski their czar, proclaimed Uladissas, son of Sigismond the Third, czar of Russia. The following year John Sigismond of Brandenburg received the solemn investiture of the duchy of Prussia from the king and from the republic of Poland. In the year 1620 the general Zolkiewski was sent with 8000 men to succour Gratian the palatine of Moldavia against the Turks and the Tartars, where, although he was environed with more than 100,000 men, he cut a passage through the enemy's army and escaped; but he was pursued and harraised for more than 100 leagues; and, arrived at the banks of the Dneiper, he thought himself in safety, when all on a sudden he saw himself abandoned by his cavalry, which passed the river by swimming; whereupon the son of this general threw himself at his father's feet, and desired him.

him to think of saving himself; but this brave man answered, "The republic has entrusted the whole army to my care, and I cannot abandon my infantry." In fact, the Turks and the Tartars fell upon this weakened body of troops with great fury and made a terrible slaughter: the son, covered with wounds, expired in the arms of his father, who likewise fell some minutes after upon his bleeding body. The republic afterwards raised a monument upon the field of battle, where the praises of Zolkiewski were rehearsed in four languages, which monument, as well as the memory of this brave man, has always been respected by the Turks and by the Tartars.

The following year Sultan Osman, a bold and enterprising young man, attacked the Poles with an army of 300,000 Turks and 100,000 Tartars: the Polish army was only 65,000 men, who were entrenched near Chockzin, a town in Moldavia; Osman attempted to force the Polish camp, but without success, and in the several attacks which he made lost 80,000 men; whereupon the Turks, despairing of gaining any advantage over their enemies, offered them peace, which the Poles, who were greatly distressed for provisions, accepted without much difficulty. The principal articles of this treaty were, 1st. That the sultan should employ his utmost endeavours to keep the Tartars within bounds. 2d. That Sigismund should suppress as much as possible the robberies and plunderings of the Cossacks. 3d. That Osman should name the woiewode of Moldavia: the Sultan promised, on his part, that he would not raise any person to this dignity but a Christian prince and a friend of the Poles.

Scarcely had Sigismund finished this formidable war, when the diet of the kingdom broke out into loud murmurs against him:

him ; they accused him, first, of having named his son Albert to a bishopric, though he was only nine years old ; secondly, of having sent great bodies of Cossacks to support the emperor against the Turks ; thirdly, of having assisted the queen to buy the territory of Zywiec upon the frontiers of Hungary, contrary to the laws of the state, which forbid the king or the queen to acquire any freehold lands in the kingdom. To quiet the minds of the people, Sigismund promised that his son, when he was of age, should take an oath of fidelity to the republic, and that they should declare all the Poles who served in foreign armies, infamous and rebels ; but he said nothing respecting the acquisitions which the queen had made. However in the following diet it was decided, that the hereditary estates of the nobility should not be transferred but to their equals ; and that the republic or any noble should be at liberty to purchase the territory of Zywiec of the queen, and that the king should not give any vacant places or dignities but to nobles of the Polish nation.

In the year 1632 Sigismund the Third died at Warsaw in the sixty-sixth year of his age : as being full of unhappy events, the reign of this prince is particularly distinguished in the Polish annals : he was called to the government of this kingdom by a formidable party ; he triumphed over the forces of the house of Austria, and carried away the crown from Maximilian his competitor ; but he lost an hereditary throne in pursuing after one that was elective. Master of Moscow, he had neither talents nor resolution sufficient to support himself there : obstinately attached to his own ideas, he never studied the genius of his people, but suffered himself to be governed by the times and by particular circumstances. If the nation had been always at

peace, Sigismund might have governed with tolerable success; but in the midst of those political struggles which Poland underwent during his reign, he held the reins of government with a very weak hand.

The diet which was soon after convoked for the election of a new king was very tumultuous; though no other candidate appeared for this dignity but the prince Uladislav, the son of the late king.

The elector of Brandenburg, as duke of Prussia, pretended to have the right of voting, but the diet remitted it to the king who should be elected to decide the validity of this pretension. The Cossacks likewise pretended to have the same right; but their pretension was rejected with indignation. Another quarrel arose in this diet on account of the arrival of the prince Uladislav, as by the fundamental laws of this state all those who offered themselves as candidates for the throne, were to keep themselves at a distance during the time of the election. The city of Dantzic obtained the right of voting by their deputies in this diet. In fact, after some time Uladislav was proclaimed unanimously king of Poland, and took the necessary oaths for the support of the liberties and privileges of the nation.

A most singular anecdote happened during this diet, which will give us a clear idea of a fundamental law of Poland, by which it was necessary that the king should be elected *nemine contradicente*. One single Polish gentleman opposed the election of Uladislav: they asked him the reason of his opposition, and whether he had any thing to reproach the prince with? he answered in the negative; "But," said he, "I will not have
" him

“ him to be my king.” The election was thereupon suspended, and they had much difficulty to bring this gentleman over to the opinion of the assembly. Some time after Uladislas sent for him, and asked him, why he had opposed him? to which he answered, “ I was determined to see whether our liberties still subsisted; I am now satisfied, and you have not a better subject in your kingdom.”

No sooner was Uladislas crowned, than he was attacked by the Russians, who made great ravages upon the frontiers of the kingdom; he immediately marched a considerable force against him, and by his great skill as a general, drew them into narrow defiles, surrounded them, and forced them to surrender at discretion with very little loss; whereupon the Turks, to support the Russians their allies, made a powerful diversion on the side of Moldavia; Uladislas immediately led on his troops against these new enemies, and gained a complete victory over them; this was soon after followed by a general peace, which procured Uladislas as much honour as his two victories.

In the year 1637 a cruel war broke out between the Poles and the Cossacks. It has been already observed that this people, who were designed to be as a kind of barrier to obstruct the invasions of the Turks and of the Tartars, had obtained of Stephen Batori a considerable tract of land in the Ukraine, together with many privileges and the free exercise of the Greek religion. Afterwards the establishments of the Cossacks became the asylum for all the Polish farmers and labourers, who were kept in a state of oppression, and who would shake off the tyranny and state of slavery under which they were kept. The nobles and the proprietors of fiefs demanded the restitution of their slaves;

the Cofacks refused to reftore them; and the nobles on the other hand refolved not only to take them by force, but alfo to reduce the Cofacks to the fame ftate of flavery in which their farmers were actually at that time.

Nicholas Potocki conducted a body of troops into the Ukraine, and raifed a confiderable fortrefs upon the banks of the Dnieper. At the fight of this rampart, which threatened their liberty, the Cofacks took up arms, but they were defeated; and notwithstanding the Poles entered into a treaty with them to confirm their privileges, and thereby promifed alfo to forget all that was paff, they afterwards cut off the head of their general Paulux, and of fome others of their chiefs. At this period even the Cofacks had no defign to fhake off their obedience to Poland; but they were from this time forward treated with fuch oppreffion and tyranny by the republic, that they foon after declared war in form againft their tyrannical mafters, and refolved to fhake off the yoke.

In the year 1645, as the kingdom of Poland was torn to pieces by the quarrels between the Roman Catholics, Greeks, Lutherans, and Calvinifts about religious matters, Uladiflas attempted to unite all thefe fefts, fo as to form only one communion. He ordered an afsembly of the moft learned clergy of thefe communions to meet at Thorn, and to lay open their doctrines, and the great chancellor was to prefide there in the name of the king: but this afsembly, far from endeavouring to unite thefe feveral fefts, irritated them the more againft each other, and their docters as ufual feparated greater enemies to each other than ever.

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The following year Uladislas, threatened by the Turks and by the Tartars, entered into a treaty of alliance with the Venetians, and obtained considerable subsidies of the pope and of the Italian princes for carrying on the war he was going to undertake. But though this treaty was made with the knowledge and consent of the nobility, supposing that their liberties were in danger, they obliged the king to promise solemnly for himself and for his successors not to raise any body of troops, not to make any alliance, nor peace, nor war, nor to send any ambassador into any foreign court, nor to admit any stranger into his council, nor to augment his guards above 1200 men, without the consent of the states. Considering the turbulent and tyrannical disposition of the Polish nobility, and their desire not only to be independent themselves, but to oppress and enslave their fellow creatures, we may justly date the origin of that plan of government, which has since brought the kingdom to destruction, from this period. The crown had no longer any power or controul over those little tyrants, and the aristocracy of the nobles was now become insufferable, and bore down all regularity and good government before it; every proud insignificant noble set himself up for the chief of a party, and under the pretence of doing himself justice, led on his vassals to plunder and oppress his neighbours.

In the year 1648 Uladislas was at Meretz in Lithuania, where he was seized with a violent fever and died, without leaving any issue. This prince had all the qualities of a great general; he was moreover bold and active, and braved dangers, without fearing or without despising them too much: he was generous and good-natured, and knew how to make himself beloved; but he was too complaisant to the Polish nobility, and without considering

sidering the consequences, gave up to them many of the great prerogatives of the crown, and sacrificed the general good of the nation to the ambition and tyranny of this turbulent order.

The death of Uladislas was the signal of revolt among the Cossacks; deprived of their privileges, disturbed in the exercise of their religion, and plundered by the Polish nobles, who had lands in the neighbouring provinces, they only wanted a chief to declare openly against the tyranny of the Polish government, which they soon found in the person of Bogdan Chmielnicki. The father of this famous man was originally of Lithuania, and afterwards came to establish himself in the Ukraine. His son, after his death, was carried off by the Tartars, but afterwards ransomed by his mother, and peaceably cultivated his little inheritance.

Jatinski, the Polish governor of the town of Czesizin, plundered and carried off the works of some mills which belonged to Chmielnicki. The Cossack carried his complaints in a very humble and decent manner to the king of Poland, but could not obtain justice: shocked at this treatment he murmured loudly against the prince, and against Jatinski, who arrested him, treated him as if he had been one of his slaves, ordered him to be whipped in the public places, carried off his wife and ravished her, and because she made some resistance, ordered her and her son afterwards to be put to death.

My readers will from this see the manner in which the Polish nobility treat their fellow creatures, who are so unhappy as to be born upon their lands.

Driven to despair, this injured gentleman fled to the banks of the Dnieper, raised and armed all the Cofacks, and was unanimously declared their general, and without losing a moment of time, and being supported by a body of Tartars, he immediately entered Poland, and destroyed all the houses of the nobility with fire and sword, sparing neither age nor sex; the farmers and day-labourers alone were spared, as they were regarded as suffering equally the oppression and tyranny of those proud and hardened wretches, whose blood now made an atonement for the numberless scenes of murder, oppression, and tyranny with which they had for some time before disgraced the very nature of human beings. The town of Leopold was saved from destruction at the expence of a great sum of money; all the ornaments of the crown were carried off from Cracow, which was threatened by the Cofacks: the nobles assembled in the diet at Warsaw proposed to retire to Dantzic: in fact, Poland would have been destroyed if the Cofacks and the Tartars had not quarrelled about dividing the spoils. This dissention, as it obliged them to retire for some time into their own country, saved the republic.

The diet now recovered a little from their first terror, and proceeded to the election of a king. Several candidates proposed themselves for the crown; George Ragotski, prince of Transilvania, presented himself at the head of 30,000 men, who were to act against the Cofacks if he was elected, or to join them if he was refused. This indecent proposal was the means of excluding him immediately; neither did they pay any greater regard to the demands of the czar of Russia, because he talked to them as if he was their master. A considerable party was formed in favour of Charles Ferdinand, bishop of Breslaw and of Plosko,
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the youngest son of Sigismund the Third; but at last all the voices united to raise John Casimir to the throne. This prince, who was the next brother to Uladislav, had actually entered into the order of Jesuits, but he was released from his vows by the pope, who had likewise given him a cardinal's hat, which he now exchanged for a crown.

No sooner was this prince crowned, than all the nation solicited him to put himself at the head of a powerful army to revenge the depredations which the Cossacks had made in the kingdom: but this prince, who wished to bring this turbulent people back to their duty by gentle measures, answered those who gave him this counsel in the following manner: "We ought not to have plundered and destroyed Chmielnicki's mills, and much less to have ravished his wife, and afterwards massacred both her and her son; if we had been just in this affair, we should not at present have been obliged to revenge ourselves of their crimes, which we have authorized by setting them the example." The Poles soon after concluded a truce with Chmielnicki, who was acknowledged as general, or hettman, of the Cossacks. The deputies of the republic were even obliged to present him with the staff of command, the horse tail, and the standard, as marks of the authority which had been conferred upon him by the Cossacks. But this truce was soon dissolved; the war broke out again; the Poles were beaten, and at last they were obliged to publish an act of indemnification, without any reserve, to the Cossacks, and to confirm all their privileges to them: however, John Casimir perceived that there was little dependence to be placed upon the faith or oaths of the Cossacks, and therefore he demanded succours of the pope to make war against them. The holy father sent him a large supply of indul-

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gences and benedictions; but as the Cofacks were not much terrified with this kind of artillery, the following year they again erected the standard of rebellion, and when joined with a considerable body of their allies the Tartars, they formed an army of 300,000 men: John Casimir, at the head of 100,000 Poles, gained a complete victory over them, and forced the Cofacks to renounce the alliance with the Tartars, and to submit themselves peaceably to the Polish government.

Scarce had the Polish army returned into their own country, when the Cofacks, at the persuasion of the Turks, revolted again: whereupon a new diet was convoked in Poland, to consider of proper means to reduce them to obedience; but this diet was soon dissolved by the opposition which one of its members made to the measures which were then in agitation, for by the fundamental laws of Poland a single member of the diet, with the word *VERO*, may stop all the proceedings of this assembly, render ineffectual their best concerted deliberations, and annul all the resolutions which they may have formed.

The following year Radziejowski, the vice-chancellor of the crown, was convicted of having excited the Cofacks to revolt: he immediately fled out of the kingdom, but he was condemned by the tribunal of the crown to lose his honour and his life; however, this sentence was afterwards changed into that of perpetual banishment. It will from hence be seen to what a daring height of insolence and licentiousness the nobility of Poland had arrived in those days. Matters were now carried to such a height between the Poles and the Cofacks, and the animosity was so great on both sides, that there was no likelihood that their differences could ever be properly adjusted, or the in-

juries which they had done each other forgotten, and therefore the following year Chmielnicki put himself under the protection of the Russians, and received the Ukraine in fief from the czar; so that this rich and fertile country was now separated for ever from the crown of Poland on account of the wickedness and tyranny of the nobility of this kingdom, and from the viciousness of their aristocratical government. The Cofacks by this convention were to serve in the Russian army as auxiliary troops. This act of the Cofacks was looked upon as a signal for the destruction of the Polish republic.

Charles Gustavus king of Sweden entered Poland with a considerable army; and in less than three months made himself master of all Prussia, except Dantzic, of a considerable part of Lithuania, of the cities of Warsaw, Cracow, and of other places in the Greater and Lesser Poland; most of the people of those provinces swearing allegiance to him, as they were deserted by their king John Casimir, who was fled into Silesia: the Russians ravaged all the northern parts of Lithuania, and the Cofacks had seized upon the greatest part of Red Russia. In the midst of this scene of distress, John Casimir put his kingdom under the protection of the Virgin Mary, as Lewis the Thirteenth had done that of France in the year 1683, and continual prayers and solicitations were offered up to the Virgin, to induce her to grant them assistance in this time of calamity. But Casimir, finding that her succours were very tardy, turned his attention towards the elector of Brandenburg, with whom he and the republic concluded the celebrated treaty of Welaw, which was in itself highly advantageous to the republic, but has since been made much more so by the wicked and abominable behaviour of the elector and of his successors. By this treaty it was.

was stipulated that the elector should assist the Poles with a certain number of troops, and that he and his successors should be the perpetual allies of Poland, and should no longer be the vassals of the republic, and that in consideration thereof he should possess the dukedom of Prussia in full sovereignty for himself and for his male heirs and successors, saving the privileges of the nation. By another treaty the districts of Lavebourg and of Butow were granted in fief to the elector; and Elbing and the Starosty of of Draheim were ceded to this prince, as a mortgage for 4000 crowns. So far from complying with the conditions of this treaty, the electors of Brandenburg and the king of Prussia have often declared themselves the enemies of the republic, without any provocation on the part of the latter, and the present chief of the Brandenburg family took the opportunity, when Poland was distressed, to join with the enemies of that republic, to seize upon a large tract of territory which has been for some hundred years past a part of that kingdom, to which neither he nor any of his ancestors ever had or ever could have any legal pretension whatever, though he has no other title to the dukedom of Prussia from which his family have lately taken the title of king, but the before-mentioned treaty, which he has broken to all intents and purposes: no right of conquest could be pleaded here, because Prussia never was conquered by any of the Brandenburg family.

But to return to my subject: in the midst of the troubles of this horrible war, which the republic had to support against all her neighbours, the clergy proposed taking violent measures for the support of the Roman Catholic religion in the strictest manner; and in consequence of this the diet renewed an ancient law of Uladislas Jagellon against all kinds of heretics, as they

called them, who were thereby condemned to lose their property and their lives, or to leave the kingdom if they did not renounce their errors in three years. It is not at all surprizing that the Poles, who had not yet renounced their ancient barbarous way of thinking, should be led to add to the miseries and calamity of their country by depopulating and driving such a number of useful subjects out of their kingdom; because we find that the government of France some years after, and at that time judged to be the most civilized government in Europe, by the desire of the Romish clergy, drove 600,000 of their most useful subjects out of the kingdom, with all their arts, manufactures, and riches; so much has mankind been bigotted to the unmeaning ceremonies of that wicked priesthood, who are no less uncharitable than they are ignorant and superstitious. The treaty of Olivia restored peace to Poland; but this war was fatal to her on every side. The czar of Russia thereby secured the possession of Smolensko, of Kiovia, and of the Ukraine.

In the year 1661 a capitation-tax was laid upon the Jews in this kingdom, which was fixed at 105,000 florins, and a tax was laid upon the consumption of tobacco in Lithuania to supply the pressing wants of the state; but at the same time Casimir forced great numbers of his subjects to leave the kingdom on account of their religion, and to take refuge in other states, and for this reason, the honest pope Alexander the Seventh granted him the title of orthodox king.

The following year, after the peace was concluded, the finances of Poland were in the greatest disorder, and the army ready to enter into a confederacy; the very thoughts of which make all the Poles tremble. Without comprehending the pretensions

tensions of the Lithuanians, those of the Poles alone exceeded six-and-twenty millions of Polish florins, near three millions of pounds sterling, an amazing sum in a country which had no commerce in those days. For to satisfy these exorbitant demands, the diet established a general capitation-tax; they coined a new species of money, much inferior in quality to the ancient coin of the kingdom, and they entered into a composition with the Poles, who agreed to receive eight millions of florins.

As soon as the army in this country enters into a confederacy, all kinds of discipline is abolished, the soldier sets no bounds to his licentiousness and depredations; he no longer acknowledges the authority of his general, and chooses himself a marshal or a chief, who, something like a Roman dictator, is invested with the power of all the orders of the republic. This marshal of the confederacy commands the army, raises troops, establishes taxes, receives ambassadors, and has the power of life and death. These confederacies are contrary to the laws of the state; but force and frequent example seem to make them appear legal, and they only become criminal when they are the weakest party.

The republic has four great officers, among whom the four principal branches of its government are divided. The first is the great general of the crown, who has the direction of the military affairs, and of every thing which depends on it, and he commands the army: second, the great chancellor, who is the chief of the law: third, the high treasurer, who presides over all the finances of the state: fourth, the great marshal, who is at the head of the police. These four great officers are called *Brachia Regalia*, or the King's Arms, and when they join with the court they keep the republic in awe.

In the year 1665 Lubomirski, the great general of the crown, who had heretofore opposed the election of a successor to the throne, was accused of having fomented the troubles of the state, and, after the example of Cromwell, that he intended to introduce into Poland the new form of government which had been received in England, to declare himself Protector, and to secure this eminent dignity to his descendants; and as this great officer could not well clear himself of this charge, he retired to Breslaw in Silesia, and soon after re-entered Poland with some of his friends in a hostile manner: in a small space of time this weak troop became a great army.

John Sobieski, who from being ensign of the crown was made general, marched by the king's orders against Lubomirski, but he was soon defeated; and what made this victory the more glorious, and discouraged the royalists, was the generous behaviour of Lubomirski to his countrymen; he sent back all the prisoners whom he had taken without any ransom, and contented himself with having humbled his enemies, and reversed the judicial sentence which was given against him, for endeavouring to overturn the government of the state; but fearing the clandestine measures which were taking by those who covered their hatred towards him, he returned to Breslaw, and six months after died suddenly.

Sobieski, now become general of the crown through the queen's interest, he having married the daughter of her governess, gained the esteem of the public, and the friendship of the king, which he found were of great use to him in his new dignity; as during the course of the following year 100,000 Tartars ravaged the provinces of Podolia and of Volhinia, who were likewise joined by a great body of Cossacks. The Poles had not at this

time above 12,000 men under their colours, and the king, in the greatest distress, concluded that every thing was lost; indeed Sobieski was almost the only person in the kingdom who thought otherwise: he immediately raised a considerable body of men upon his own lands, and formed a magazine for their support; he paid them with his own money, and borrowed upon his credit for their subsistence: in fact, he formed an army of 20,000 men, and therewith marched to meet the enemy, and during this march he wrote the following letter to his wife: “ On such a day I will occupy, with 12,000 men, an entrenched camp before Podahiec, where the Cossack Doroszenko will come and besiege me; the next day, and the following days, I will make a sally upon the enemies: I have already disposed the ambuscades upon all the passages, and I make no doubt but that I shall be able to ruin this great army.” The Poles blamed their general very much, and murmured loudly against his conduct; whereupon he harangued his army in the following terms: “ I will make no alteration in my plan, and the success of it will make it appear that it was well digested: moreover, I am not disposed to retain any persons with me who are afraid to die in defence of their country; they may retire when they please, and die ignominiously by the sword of the Cossacks or of the Tartars: for my part I am determined to remain here with those brave men who love their country, and who are not intimidated by the numbers of those turbulent robbers. I know that victory has often decided in favour of a small number of men who were animated by their country’s wrongs, and doubt not but that she will declare in our favour.” The Poles blushed at hearing this discourse, and resolved to support their general, who in the midst of his intrenchments, where he had every thing to fear, insulted continually

tinually 100,000 enemies who besieged him. The most important and decisive battles are often gained or lost in four hours, but this was disputed during seventeen hours successively, during which the Cossacks and Tartars made a considerable number of ineffectual attacks and assaults, and the Poles an equal number of sallies, and the whole was concluded by a general action, wherein the Tartars, after the most powerful efforts, left 20,000 men upon the field of battle. The Poles were astonished at their success, and remained in a state of admiration; but Sobieski, by the superiority of his genius and his experience, had foreseen every thing, and thereby saved the state. This signal victory obliged the Cossacks and Tartars to retire, and gave the nation some time to breathe: but this joy was soon after troubled.

Fatigued by the troubles and chagrin which he had suffered upon the throne, during a reign which had undoubtedly been much agitated, Casimir resolved to descend from it, and convoked a diet to make known to them his resolution. The Poles made several remonstrances against this measure, but to no purpose; whereupon the senators, and even the primate, were ready to throw themselves at the king's feet, but he forbid them to act this humiliating part, till now unknown in the republic; and when all the members of the senate and of the diet were assembled, the king mounted the throne for the last time, and made the following discourse to them: "It is two hundred and
" eighty years that my ancestors have governed you; their time
" is past, and mine is ready to expire. Fatigued by war, by
" counsels, and by age, and crushed down by the labours and
" toils of a twenty-one years reign, I, your king, and your fa-
" ther, deliver into your hands, what the world esteems the
" most,

“ most, a crown, and choose for a throne six feet of earth to
“ unite myself to my fathers. When you shew my tomb to
“ your children, tell them that I was the first in the battle and
“ the last in the retreat ; that I have renounced the grandeur of
“ kings for the good of my country ; that I have restored the
“ sceptre to those from whom I received it. It was your love
“ for me which raised me to the high rank where I am at
“ present, and it is my love for you which makes me descend
“ from it. Many of my predecessors have transmitted the
“ sceptre to their sons or to their brothers ; for my part, I will
“ restore it to the country of which I have been the child and
“ the father, and from this moment, divested of all kind of
“ grandeur, I will mix with the crowd ; from being the
“ sovereign, I will become the subject ; from being your king,
“ I will become your fellow-citizen, and leave my place to him
“ whom you shall think worthy of your voices : the republic
“ will choose well, and will prosper, if heaven will hear my
“ prayers in the solitude where I am going to retire. I must
“ now thank the republic for all the services which she has done
“ me, for all the counsels which she has given me, and for all
“ the zeal that she has shewn in my behalf ; and if, contrary to
“ my inclination, I have been so unhappy as to displease any
“ individuals, I must desire them rather to impute it to the un-
“ happiness of the times, or to chance, than to any inclination
“ of mine, and to pardon me, as I do pardon all those who have
“ offended me. I will now bid you all adieu ; but I always will
“ keep you in my remembrance ; distance of place may separate
“ me from the republic, but my heart will always be with this
“ tender mother ; and I will order that my remains shall be
“ laid in her bosom.”

Casimir hereupon presented the deploma of his abdication in form to the states, who returned him the counter-part, and a pension of 300,000 florins.

John Casimir was the last prince of the race of the Jagellons; born the son of a king, he became a Jesuit and a cardinal, and mounted the throne of Poland; and afterwards descended from it to retire into France to govern the Monks of St. Germain des Pres and St. Martin de Nevers, of whom Lewis the Fourteenth granted him the abbeys.

Casimir was a good husband, a good master, a good friend, brave and undaunted in war, a judge of great integrity, and an honest man; but he wanted that application and activity which are necessary to govern a state well; calculated to lead a private life, his quiet virtues made no great figure in the storms and confusion which generally surround a throne.

The foundation was laid for the destruction of this once powerful kingdom by dismembering the provinces from the dominion of the crown, and establishing a number of little sovereignties in the bosom of the state, and by the independency and tyranny of the clergy and the nobles; but during the reign of John Casimir, all mankind saw the declension of the republic. The Cossacks had shaken off all obedience to Poland, and put themselves under the protection of the Russians; the sovereignty of the dukedom of Prussia was ceded to the elector of Brandenburg; the districts of Lavebourg and of Butow were conferred in fief upon this prince, and Elbing and the starosty of Draheim were engaged to him for a great sum of money; and a great part of Livonia and the palatinates

palatinates of Smolensko, of Severia, and of Czerniechow were dismembered from the kingdom.

The abdication of Casimir opened the way to the throne of Poland to all the foreign princes who thought themselves worthy of ascending it. A great number of candidates entered the lists, but neither of them could fix all the voices of the electors in his favour, and the different parties were ready to begin a civil war, when one of the senators proposed the election of a Piast, named Michael Wicnowiecki, whom, to prevent any worse consequences, they unanimously elected king. They sent immediately in search of Wicnowiecki, and found him in a convent at Warsaw: they informed him that he was king; he fell into tears, and declared himself incapable of supporting the weight of the crown. In fine, after some sollicitations he suffered himself to be persuaded, and with trembling knees he mounted a throne which he was not in a state to fix. When Casimir heard of this election, he cried out, "How! have they crowned this poor man!"

The following year the Cossacks threatened Poland, and the king and his ministers endeavoured by negotiations to hinder a war, but without success; whereupon John Sobieski, great general of the crown, was sent to oppose them, and he began his operations by intriguing and setting them one against the other; afterwards he attacked and took the towns of Bar, of Nimirow, of Braclaw, and all the tract of country between the Bog and the Dneister; whereupon the vice-chancellor wrote to the general in the following terms: "We cannot enough admire your courage and
 " your prudence in this expedition. How is it that, with a
 " handful of men, you have been able to re-conquer so many
 " places; Braclaw in particular, which alone is worth a victory?"

“ You have opened us a passage into the Ukraine, and I make
 “ no doubt but that you will oblige the Cofacks to return
 “ again under our obedience, whereby even envy herself will
 “ be forced to acknowledge that you are the defender of your
 “ country.”

The Polish nation soon repented that they had crowned Michael Wiernowiecki; they murmured loudly when they heard that he had married Eleanor arch-duchess of Austria, and when they saw him decorated with the order of the golden fleece. “ It was
 “ not in this manner that Stephen Battori conducted himself,” said some of the boldest of the Poles, “ when the Spanish ambassador presented him with the same order. This king,
 “ whose memory we still revere, made a collar, to which was
 “ hung, in the place of a fleece, the figure of a king armed,
 “ with a menacing aspect.” “ *This is my order,*” said he to the ambassador; “ *I will accept yours, when my brother the king of*
 “ *Spain shall have received mine.*”

In the year 1672 the nation were so highly offended with Michael that they wanted to depose him; and at a diet which was held at Warsaw the primate addressed the following discourse to him: “ The nation has made you king, and you want to
 “ destroy her: instead of endeavouring to pacify the Ukraine,
 “ you have done every thing to irritate the Cofacks against us.
 “ You have not repaired the fortifications of Kaminiec, this
 “ rampart of Poland. You have retained the German guard,
 “ which the republic cannot see but with regret. You retain
 “ men at your court, and even in your cabinet, who sacrifice the
 “ interests of the kingdom for those of the king. You dispose
 “ of the starosties and of the places of senators before the death
 “ of

“ of those who occupy them, which you know is contrary to
“ our constitution. You have dissolved two diets, because you
“ would not expose your authority to the animadversions of the
“ laws. You have reclaimed the ancient rights of the kings of
“ Poland, and protested against every thing which tended to
“ diminish them. Where will you search after those ancient rights,
“ that they may be extended as far as you could wish them?
“ Will you search for them in the records of Vienna and of
“ Madrid? You declared soon after your coronation, in the
“ presence of several persons, that you had sworn to observe the
“ Pacta Conventa with a mental restriction. What faith then
“ can we add to your oaths? We will break ours also, and
“ follow your example.”

Highly offended at this discourse, Michael assembled 100,000 gentlemen of the inferior nobility upon the borders of the Vistula, and chose Czarneski to be marshal of this royal confederacy, to whom he likewise gave the power to raise a new army. The army of the crown confederated themselves likewise under the command of their general Sobieski, who established his camp at Lowitz in the palatinate of Rava. The king set a price upon the head of Sobieski, as well as upon that of the primate, without considering that the kingdom was at that time threatened by a great army of the Turks and another of the Tartars and Cossacks. It was upon this occasion that all the officers in Sobieski's army took an oath to stand by him to the last drop of their blood. “ I accept your
“ oath,” said he to them, “ but let us first think of defending our
“ country.” At the approach of the Turkish army the 100,000 royalists dispersed themselves, and this vain pageant of a king ran away, and shut himself up in the town of Lublin; whereupon Sobieski, who had now nothing to fear from his fellow-citizens,

citizens, attacked the enemies with great vigour; and after a great number of small actions, and a general action wherein he gained a complete victory, drove the Tartars and Cossacks out of the kingdom, and restored 30,000 Poles their liberty. If this great body of royalists, as they called themselves, had seconded his operations, the Turks would have shared the same fate; but finding no opposition they made themselves masters of Kaminiac, of the Ukraine, and of Podolia, which were ceded to them by a treaty of peace, in which the king Michael likewise obliged himself to submit to pay an annual and perpetual tribute of 100,000 ducats to the Ottoman Porte. Poland, which was greatly weakened in the preceding reign, was now reduced to the lowest ebb; and the principal part of her inhabitants severely repented that they had elected this thing of straw to be their king. In the year 1673 they solicited John Sobieski to attend the diet at Warsaw to concert some measures for drawing the kingdom out of this unhappy situation; and notwithstanding he exposed himself to the greatest dangers, as Michael had set a price upon his head, this great man resolved to brave all dangers, and to use his utmost endeavours to save his country: he discovered the wounds of the state, and at the same time offered to cicatrize them: he shed tears upon reciting the late treaty with the Turks, and concluded, that the republic ought to declare it null, as being made without their participation. "We may very easily do it at Warsaw," said one of the senators to him, "but how will they regard this rupture at Constantinople?" "With fury, no doubt," said Sobieski, "but we have sabres and courage still left, and we will not wait for the enemy to come to us, but we will go and attack him." And to give the more weight to his sentiments, he continued his discourse with that rapid and manly eloquence which inflames the passions of the auditor, and leaves him no

time for reflection. "I am well acquainted," said he, "with
" the small number of our troops, and with the distressed state
" of our finances ; but neither of these disorders is without a
" remedy. The farmers who cultivate our lands gain some
" degree of liberty when they have arms in their hands, and
" they will very soon become soldiers when their chief is a
" general. I will only demand 60,000 men to make you entirely
" independent of the Ottoman Porte : but perhaps you will ask
" me, where are we to find a fund to pay this army ? If I was
" to propose to you to sell the sacred vessels of the church, you
" ought even to consent freely to it, because our country is
" more sacred to us than the instruments and ornaments of
" religion ; but I shall not propose any such measure : the re-
" public has a treasure in the castle of Cracow ; will you wait
" for the Turks to come and take it away from you as soon as
" they know that it is there ? Let us employ it to break the
" chains which they have forged for us. You will wait for a
" more favourable opportunity, for alliances, for subsidies, &c.
" but you will permit me to tell you, that negotiations are
" often very long, the event is uncertain, and the present is in
" our power : your ancestors would have preferred death to one
" year of slavery."

This discourse so animated and inflamed all the senators, that they immediately declared the treaty null, and resolved upon a war ; but while preparations were making to carry Sobieski's plans into execution, an infamous informer accused that general of having called the Tartars into Poland, and of having received money for giving up Kaminiac. Surprized and shocked at this accusation, the general retired : the accuser was arrested and cross-examined, when he prevaricated ; and at length confessed, that

that a cabal of the court had pushed him on to this wicked action: however he was condemned to death; and they gave him into the hands of Sobieski, who, as being the great marshal of the crown, was to order his execution: but this was to save his life; for they knew that Sobieski had too much grandeur of soul to put his enemy to death when he was at his feet crying for mercy.

Soon after this a Turkish Aga came to Warsaw to demand of the Poles the humiliating tribute which was granted by the last treaty of peace; but he found the king Michael expiring, and could not deliver him the sultan's letter. At the same time Sobieski attacked the Turkish army near Chockzin and gained a complete victory over them: 20,000 Turks were killed upon the field of battle, and 10,000 more were drowned in the river Dneister; the vanquishers did not lose 6000 men. The king Michael died the same day that the battle of Chockzin was fought: he was one of the weakest and most insignificant creatures that ever was placed at the head of any government. One of the most singular caprices of fortune placed him upon the throne; and his death put an end to the intrigues and measures which were secretly carrying on to make him descend from it again.

There were never so many competitors for the crown of Poland as at this time: among many others were the dukes of Lorraine and Mantua, the count of Soissons, the eldest son of the duke of Neubourg, the son of the czar of Moscow, the dukes of Bavaria, of York, and of Vendome, the prince of Transilvania, don John of Austria natural son of Philip the Second king of Spain, all of whom made the most splendid offers

offers to gain the voices of the nation; but the great merit and reputation of John Sobieski eclipsed them all, and, by the almost unanimous consent of the nation, he was advanced to the throne.

Besides swearing to observe the *Pacta Conventa*, this prince obliged himself to pay out of the royal revenues the dower which was assigned to the queen Eleanor, to give up to the republic a pretension which he had to 150,000 florins, and with his own money to redeem the jewels of the crown, which were engaged for 338,000 florins, to establish a military school, and to fortify two towns; so that, if we consider the whole of these obligations, Sobieski, with all his merit, was rather obliged to purchase the crown than otherwise.

Mortified at their late defeat, and breathing nothing but revenge against the Poles, the Turks the following year advanced with a formidable army towards Poland. Sobieski, who was now in the Ukraine, quitted that country, and came and encamped under Leopold: he had only 15,000 men to oppose the Grand Vizier's army, which was near 200,000 men; but while he was intrenching himself, he was informed that the Turkish general, instead of marching directly to him, entered the Ukraine, and amused himself with besieging Human; whereupon Sobieski declared, that "as he knows no better, I will give a good account of this great army before the end of the campaign." Nevertheless the Vizier detached 50,000 men to destroy Sobieski's little army; and the Poles, more anxious for their king than for themselves, desired him to retire to a place of safety; but the king answered them smiling, "Surely you would despise me if I was to follow your counsel." The Turks attacked the Poles

with great vigour, but after the second discharge they were thrown into disorder and retired with great precipitation: 15,000 Turks fell upon the field of battle, and the night coming on preserved the remainder of this army.

While one part of the Turkish army was beaten under the walls of Leopold, the Vizier, Kara Mustapha, occupied himself with besieging the fortrefs of Trembowla in Podolia, which was defended with great bravery till it was reduced almost to the last extremity; but John Sobieski, who had now increased his army to 35,000 men, arriving, forced him to raise the siege, and to retire with the loss of 8000 men. After the campaign was finished, Sobieski returned to Cracow with an Asiatic pomp, where he was crowned; and the whole nation, full of gratitude, saw with joy the crown upon the head of a prince who had so often saved his country.

The queens of Poland always desired to be crowned at the same time; indeed they were particularly interested in having this ceremony performed, for without it, when they became widows they were no longer treated as queens, and lost their dower of 2000 ducats yearly, which the republic assigned them upon the salt-works, and upon the starosties of Spiz and of Grodnec; however, such was the turbulent disposition of the Poles at this time, that notwithstanding all the great acts which Sobieski had done for them, it was not without much tumult and difficulty that he could obtain the favour of having his wife crowned with him.

The following year, 1676, an army of 300,000 Turks and Tartars advanced towards Poland; Sobieski, at the head of
38,000

38,000 men, marched out to meet them, and encamped near Zurawno in the province of Pokuchia, between the Seevitz and the Dneister, where he was soon after surrounded by this great army. The Poles began to tremble; whereupon Sobieski asked them, whether he had not saved them when they were in the same situation at Podhayec, and when their army was not above 24,000 men? “And do you think,” says he, “that the crown has weakened my head?” All communication was soon cut off, so that the Poles were as it were besieged in a citadel, to which the Turks endeavoured to advance by trenches, and the Poles endeavoured to keep them off by counter-trenches: this was perhaps the first time that two armies approached each other in this manner. Though Sobieski was in this dangerous situation, the Turks thought him formidable, and offered him peace; but all their propositions were rejected with disdain; he detested every article wherein the tribute was mentioned which was imposed upon his predecessor, and declared that he only wanted a sufficient space to decide the fate of the two empires by force of arms. The Tartars murmured; the Russians armed themselves to assist the Poles, and several other Christian powers proposed themselves as mediators of the peace, or otherwise threatened to take an active part in the war. The Turks therefore gave up the affair of the tribute, restored the two thirds of the Ukraine, and were glad to preserve the fortrefs of Kaminiec, and to sign the peace.

Sobieski engaged himself by this treaty to send a solemn embassy to the Sultan: Gninski, palatine of Culm, was charged with this commission the following year, and was accompanied with 700 Poles. When he was distant one league from Constantinople, he pretended, contrary to the common practice, that the

Grand Vizier should come and receive him at the gate of the city. Kara Mustapha let him stay for some time at the place where he stopped; but when he demanded provisions for the 700 men who were with him, the Vizier wittily answered, “If he is come
 “to take Constantinople, he has not men enough; but if it
 “is only to represent his sovereign, he has too many: and it is
 “as easy for the Sultan to furnish a table for 700 Poles as to
 “nourish 7000 who serve in his gallies.” When this ambassador made his public entry, he ordered his people to shoe his horses with silver, and to fix them on in such a manner that they might part easily in passing through the town. The Turks brought one of these shoes of silver to the Vizier, who observed, that “this Infidel has shoes of silver for his horses, but he has
 “a head of lead; since, as he is sent to represent a poor
 “republic, he does not know how to employ his silver in a
 “better manner.”

In the year 1681 there was a diet held at Grodno, agreeably to the proposal which had been made in the year 1673 for that purpose, in which the queen wished to have some propositions made touching the augmentation of her household; and as she assisted at the deliberations of this assembly, she perceived that neither the king nor any of his friends mentioned her affair; she therefore sent her chancellor, who was a churchman, to desire the king to think of her proposition. The king refused to hear the chancellor, and sent him back; but he was obliged to return, and was worse received than before: and moreover some very hard and insulting words escaped the prince upon this occasion; whereupon the chancellor, with as much respect as firmness, replied, “If your majesty has forgotten that I am a
 “clergyman, you should remember at least that I am a gentle-
 “man.”

“man.” “It is sufficient,” said the king, “that you are a man; I feel that I have done wrong; you shall not in future have any reason to complain of me.” The chancellor returned, penetrated with the king’s goodness of heart, and the queen’s proposal was immediately brought before the assembly. This diet, from the multiplicity of affairs which it had to regulate, had already continued six months, and was then dissolved by one of those abuses of liberty which we often meet with in the history of this kingdom.

It had been an ancient custom, which had at length passed into a law, that every session of the diet should finish by a certain day; but they had still several other affairs of consequence to bring on before this diet, and for the greater expedition, the king at one of their meetings ordered that the candles should be lighted, which was contrary to the letter of the law; whereupon the Nonce Priemski dissolved the diet, protested against their proceedings, and retired, and they could never engage him to return again.

In the year 1683, during the war between the Turks and the Imperialists, the imperial army was beaten, and the Turks laid siege to Vienna, which was closely pressed on every side, and ready to fall into the enemy’s hands, who, by that means, would have made themselves masters of the greatest part of the Austrian dominions. The emperor, his family, and all the principal inhabitants of this city had abandoned it, and were in the greatest distress: they solicited Sobieski to grant them succours, otherwise the proud Austrian, notwithstanding all his German connections, would not have been master of a place whereon he could lay his head. This great prince, at the head of 36,000

Poles, marched immediately to their assistance, raised the siege of Vienna, and forced the Turks to retire into their own country. We have lately seen the manner in which this stately court recompenses such signal acts of favour and protection.

As the Turks had now received a severe check, Sobieski made preparations the following year to retake Kaminiac, but without success; the place was well defended; and the two armies remained encamped for some time opposite to each other upon the two banks of the Dneister, so that neither of them dared undertake any great operation. According to the law the diet ought to have been held the following year at Grodno in Lithuania, but Sobieski convoked it to Warsaw; and as a reason for this measure, he observed that Grodno was at such a distance, that it would not be possible for the officers to arrive from thence to the southern frontiers of the kingdom early enough in the spring to open the campaign. The Lithuanians would not receive this excuse, but assembled themselves at Grodno, formed a senate and a chamber of Nonces, and opposed their diet to the other. This affair would have become serious, if the king had not proposed to elect a Lithuanian to be marshal of the diet, and to give the council of the republic which was held at Warsaw the name of the diet of Grodno; this measure was adopted, calmed the spirits of the turbulent nobles, and prevented a dangerous schism. Hence it will be seen, that in matters of politics as well as in those of religion, the most obstinate people will permit themselves to be seduced by words, while they neglect the reality of things.

Never were the members of any diet more turbulent than in the present: the king in his privy-council had named Oginski, palatine

palatine of Troki, to be great chancellor of Lithuania; but the Polish nobility pretended that this nomination ought to have been made in the diet, and great debates arose upon this matter. The Lithuanians pretended that Oginski should resign his place; or that, after a new nomination, he should take an oath in the assembly to act in every respect according to law. Pack, a near relation of the late chancellor, had flattered himself to succeed to this office; but, deprived of this hope, he spoke very boldly in the assembly, and made some very severe reflections upon the king in his presence; whereupon this prince, forgetting what was due to himself, laid his hand upon his sabre, and drawing it half out of the sheath, told him, "You will oblige me to make you feel the weight of my arm." Upon which Pack, in the same attitude, replied, "You will remember, Sir, when we were upon an equality, that you have experienced what I was capable of doing in this way." It was very common in those days for the members of the diets of Poland to enter upon an interesting argument with their sabres in their hands.

The queen, who was the protectress of Oginski, was the cause of all this quarrel; but she advised the means of extinguishing it. By her desire, the Lithuanians were asked by what authority they were called together to form a diet? They could not avoid confessing that it was by the authority of the chancellor whose nomination they contested; whereupon they were informed, that they were not Nonces if this magistrate was not legally nominated: from that moment all those who would remain nonces consented that Oginski should remain chancellor. The king, whose bad state of health prevented him from taking the command of the army, appointed the general Koniski to this command; but it was very soon observed, that the Turks were not so much kept in

in awe by the presence of this general as they were by that of the king. The Turkish army was double the number of that of the Poles, and Koniski was obliged to make a retreat; upon which his officers and soldiers murmured loudly, and desired him not to wound their honour and that of their country. "I am not wounded," said the general, "but I see some wounded persons among you who would fight with their wounds." No great action passed during this campaign; both parties acted rather upon the defensive than otherwise.

In perusing the history of this kingdom it will be observed, that disorder, tumult, and discord have always been the soul of their diets, and that the most trifling accident has often destroyed their best intentions, from an abuse of that power with which the members of those assemblies are invested, which they call liberty, but which I should deem licentiousness. No sooner was the diet opened at Grodno in the year 1688, than the greatest part of the members expressed their resentment and indignation against the king, who had often saved his country from destruction, and preserved them even the existence of a diet, because he would place the young prince, a child of whom he was very fond, by his side upon the throne. They all cried out that it was a violation of the laws, and that Sobieski would give a king to Poland against the consent of the nation: moreover, they threatened to dissolve the diet if the prince did not immediately quit Lithuania. He was obliged to quit the province as soon as possible; but the queen, to revenge herself, pushed on a turbulent Nonce, who by uttering the word *VERO* with a thundering voice, rendered all the deliberations of the diet null.

The

The king was in hopes of remedying this disorder, and quieting the people by a decree of the senate; but a dispute about a chair deprived him even of this resource. Radziowski, bishop of Warmia, as bishop, had by right a place in the senate; but as he had some time before received a cardinal's hat from Rome, he pretended to have the first chair. By the laws of Poland, the Roman purple gave no rank, nor any precedence to the prelate who was invested with it, except by the consent of the states, and therefore the claim of precedence could not have been made, if the archbishopric of Gnesna, which was become vacant, had not been given to Radziowski, who, as the primate of the kingdom, could have no competitor; nevertheless the other bishops insisted that as he had not yet received the bull to qualify him as archbishop from Rome, he could not be regarded in that quality; and the king and his friends had much difficulty to make them understand that this bull regarded only the spiritual functions, and not the prerogatives of the primacy.

During these troubles, which agitated the republic, a preacher in explaining the necessity of the confession, addressed the following words to the queen: "Kings confess their little crimes, but
"not those which are of any great consequence; there is a
"prince, who without doubt does not believe that it is a crime
"to sell all the places of trust in the republic, and to ruin his
"country for the blind complaisance which he has for his wife." This bold preacher was obliged to retract in the pulpit what he had said; but he was not punished, as his words were general; however, as many of the Poles were convinced of the truth of what he had said, this daring act highly exasperated the people against the king and queen.

Two Jews, who were protected by the queen, had the greatest authority in Poland during the latter part of the reign of Sobieski: the one called Jonas, was his physician, and the other called Bethsal, rented the lands of the crown much above their value, which he made up by harraffing the people and by selling the king's favour. By an ancient custom established in Poland, when the general of the crown divided his troops into winter quarters, he generally spared the lands which belonged to the church, as well as those of the nobility; so that the poor farmers and others were often by this means distressed and ruined, whilst the proud and insolent nobility and clergy, who were their neighbours, were rioting in luxury and opulence; and this was deemed Polish liberty!

But in the year 1693 Sapieha, general of Lithuania, pressed by necessity, judged that he ought to regard the public good in preference to any custom of this kind, and that no lands ought to be excepted in such a case, on account of any kind of privilege whatever; whereupon the bishop of Wilna poured the thunders of the church upon the head of this pretended criminal in the following terms: “As Casimir Sapieha, “general of Lithuania, renouncing the obligations of his baptism to obey the instigation of the devil, has violated the “ecclesiastical immunities, it is by the ax of excommunication “that we must cut off this rotten member, to the end that the “whole body of the faithful are not thereby brought into a state of “corruption; and for this reason, by the power which God had “given us to bind and to unbind in heaven and upon the earth, “in the name of the Holy Trinity, of St. Peter, and of all “the saints, we do forbid the said Sapieha to enter into the “church, to use the sacraments, and even to come into the
 II. “society

“ society of Christians ; and we deliver him and all his adherents over to the power of the devil, and to eternal fire.”

It would be losing time to make any comment upon this infamous prostitution of the Christian religion, because this has been the constant practice of the Romish clergy for several centuries past.

Sobieski, forgetting that he was a great general and a king, was so weak as to espouse the cause of this abandoned bishop ; but the nobles joined the party of Sapieha. The ecclesiastics in their writings quoted the decisions of the three councils, and of many popes, in favour of their immunities, and particularly the famous bull of Paul the Fifth *in cena Domini*, and the orders of five kings of Poland. The nobles replied, that Sapieha was obliged by necessity to make use of the lands of the ecclesiastics, as well as those of the nobles, and that he was authorized by the republic so to do, and consequently that the excommunication was unjust and null in itself. But this quarrel, kindled by a wicked and abandoned bishop, divided the nation, as the clergy were now very powerful, and was the cause of much disorder and bloodshed.

In the year 1694, during the diet which was held at Warsaw, where the nobility of Poland and the nobility of Lithuania troubled the republic by their reciprocal animosity, their valets, who were for the most part the sons of the prior and inferior classes of the nobility, assembled themselves in a remote part of the town, and formed two armies, the one Polish and the other Lithuanian, elected two generals, marched on to the field of battle, fought with sticks and stones, besieged each other

other in the farmers houses, made prisoners, restored them, and afterwards entered into the town with all the subordination of regular troops.

This action, though several were killed, would have been of no consequence, was it not that two Lithuanian officers, with 150 men, attacked the Polish servants with their pistols and sabres, and then great numbers were killed upon the spot. The Poles fled, and night coming on, quelled in some measure this disorder; but the next day it recommenced; they brought the dead bodies of those unfortunate servants to the door of the assembly house: the two officers who were the cause of those murders, attempted to enter the diet, and to take their places, but they were insulted and beaten, and the Polish servants followed them into the chambers of the Nonces. The Lithuanians, astonished at these excesses, retired, and declared that there was no longer any security for them in the territories of the republic; and the diet was immediately dissolved.

I should not have taken notice of this anecdote, but to shew my readers the terrible disorders and scenes of bloodshed which frequently happened in this kingdom from the abuses of what the Poles call their liberty.

The following year, John Sobieski being in a very weak and infirm state, the queen was very desirous that he should make a will: a bishop charged himself with making the proposal to him, and took the first opportunity to insinuate to his majesty the necessity that he was under of declaring his last will and testament: to which the king very seriously answered, "It will not be productive of any good end. Do not you see," said he, "that
" the

“ the hearts of all the people are corrupted, and that their heads
 “ are disordered ? And can I flatter myself to restore good order
 “ by a testament ? Unhappy kings ! we give orders in our life-
 “ time, and they will not obey us, how then can we expect
 “ that they will hear us when we are no more ? I esteem him
 “ who when in the midst of his career does good to his relations
 “ and friends ; but does he know that what he leaves them
 “ when he dies will ever come to them ? What are become of
 “ the testaments of the kings my predecessors ; in a nation where
 “ gold commands, it is the money that judges ; and would you
 “ have me to make a testament to embroil and disorder the na-
 “ tion still more ?” Sobieski has here given a lively character of
 the Polish nation ; for I should have observed, that testaments in
 this kingdom are generally much more favourable to the execu-
 tors than to the heirs, as the former are always chosen from
 among those powerful persons who do not want the means of re-
 taining the inheritance of their pupils.

Soon after this a paralytic disorder put an end to the days of
 John Sobieski, who died in the seventy-sixth year of his age,
 and in the twenty-third year of his reign.

This prince had great talents and many good qualities, but
 he had likewise many vices. He was a good husband, a
 good father, and was capable of friendship ; he was well instructed
 in the laws and political interests of his country, as well as
 of those of the neighbouring states ; he was well informed in
 all the modern polite literature, and expressed himself with great
 eloquence in many languages ; he was a great general, who
 by the superiority of his genius often saved his country from
 destruction, and his military services raised him to the throne :
 he pardoned all the insults which were offered to his person,

and only punished such as offended against their country ; he used his utmost endeavours to drive the spirit of intolerance in matters of religion out of Poland ; in fact, the Poles admired many of his great actions, but they could not love him, because they found that he gave way too much to and often countenanced the intrigues of the queen, whose avarice was insatiable, and who was continually taking some clandestine measures against the liberties of the state. Sobieski suffered himself to be blindly led by this avaricious woman, and by that means made a great part of the Polish nation dislike him ; so that notwithstanding all his great acts he could not form a party to raise his son to the throne. Charles the Twelfth, who only admired the hero, when he saw his tomb, shed some tears, and said, “ That such a great king ought never to die.”

When the throne was declared vacant, the candidates for this high dignity were prince James Sobieski, eldest son of the late king, the brother of the elector of Palatine ; Leopold duke of Lorraine ; Lewis prince of Baden ; Frederic Augustus elector of Saxony ; and the prince of Conti ; but all the voices were divided between the two latter, each of whom was elected by the party that supported him ; but Augustus at length obtained the prize. The party of the prince of Conti, at the head of whom was the primate of the kingdom, supported itself to the end of the year, when that prince appeared with a French fleet and some troops in the harbour of Dantzic ; but the Saxons troops, who were stationed upon this coast, so intimidated the Poles, that they dared not declare in his favour ; so that this prince was forced to retire into France, and leave the kingdom to his competitor, who

who soon after accommodated matters with the cardinal primate, and all the rest of his party.

When Augustus came to the throne, besides swearing to observe the Pacta Conventa, he engaged to retake Kaminiec, as well as to restore the rich province of Livonia to the republic, which was at that time in the hands of the Swedes. It is true, that what their king Michael had so ignominiously lost, and what John Sobieski could not retake during two bloody wars, Augustus recovered without shedding the blood of any of his subjects; for by the peace of Carlowitz, made in the year 1699, the Ottoman porte restored to Poland the fortrefs of Kaminiec, and all the places which the Turks held in Podolia and in the Ukraine. This same year the diet of pacification confirmed the election of Augustus the Second, and passed several acts for the support of the Catholic religion, as well as for the support of all the rights and privileges of the nation: they assured the prince the nomination to all the bishoprics and abbies: but in the year 1736 Augustus the Third reserved only the nomination to twelve of the principal abbies, and permitted the Monks of all the others to elect their respective chiefs themselves.

In the year 1700 a great scene was opened in the North, which drew the attention of all Europe. Augustus had promised to render Livonia to the republic, but he was first to take it from the Swedes, and for this purpose he formed an alliance with the czar Peter the First and with the king of Denmark, as hath been before observed, and invested Riga with a Polish and Saxon army, which he bombarded for some time, but without any effect, as the Swedes defended themselves with great
bravery.

bravery. At length, through the intercession of the Dutch, who had a great magazine of merchandize in the town, which they were fearful would be destroyed, and through the severity of the season, which had destroyed a much greater number of his men than the fire of the enemy, Augustus raised the siege, and retired to some distance from the town into winter quarters.

During the course of this winter, Augustus allied himself more closely with the czar, against Charles the Twelfth, who now appeared in this country at the head of a powerful and victorious army. These two sovereigns had an interview at Birzen in Lithuania. Augustus promised to furnish his ally with 50,000 Germans, who were to be hired from the different princes of the empire; and the czar was to send 50,000 Russians into Poland to learn the military exercises. If those princes had had time to carry this treaty fully into execution, in all probability they would have given laws to all the North, and Poland would have soon become an hereditary monarchy; but they had to contend with a bold, active, and enterprizing enemy, who defeated all their schemes, at least for some time, who beat the Saxon and Polish army near Riga, seized upon all the duchy of Courland, and pursued his enemies into Poland. Hereupon the nation divided again into two factions; the one, who had formerly taken the part of the prince of Conti, joined Charles the Twelfth, and the other gave very little assistance to their legal king: such has been always the nature of the Poles when they saw themselves obliged to submit to any regular form of government.

The beginning of the following year Augustus was informed that the senate of Poland was determined to send an embassy
to

to Charles the Twelfth, and therefore he determined to avert this blow, which was aimed against his authority, and rather to receive laws from a generous enemy than from his seditious subjects, he sent a secret deputation to make some proposals to Charles, but they were not heard; and as the season for taking the field advanced, Augustus put himself at the head of all his forces, and resolved to risk his fortune upon the event of a battle, which was soon after fought at Cliflow; and if the Poles had shewed as much valour and bravery as the Saxons, Charles the Twelfth had been obliged to retire with precipitation out of Poland. The two kings fought as if they were to decide the fate of Europe: Augustus was present in the greatest danger, and rallied his troops three times himself; and Charles as often sustained the impetuosity of the Saxon troops; but the right wing of Augustus's army, which was composed entirely of Poles, fled with the greatest precipitation after the first fire, and gave the Swedes an opportunity of flanking the Saxons, so that victory declared in favour of the former. Such were the dreadful effects of the hatred which the Poles had conceived against the Saxons. Trembling for their pretended liberty, or rather licentiousness, the subjects of the king dreaded more the subjects of the elector, who came to defend them, than of the Swedes who would oppress them.

After this battle Augustus convoked an extraordinary diet to assemble at Lublin, wherein the cardinal primate endeavoured as much as possible to hide his animosity against the king Augustus: this prelate was ready to take an oath that he had not undertaken any thing against his king; but Augustus stopt him, and told him, he would prevent him from being perjured; and

desired him not to undertake any thing against his king in future.

But scarcely had this primate quitted Lublin before he again declared openly in favour of Charles the Twelfth, joined the assembly at Warsaw holden under the auspices of the king of Sweden, and there declared "Augustus, elector of Saxony, "incapable of wearing the crown, and pronounced the "throne vacant." Hence it will be seen that perjury, rebellion, ingratitude, and every other mean and base act concur to form the character of a Polish archbishop and a cardinal.

Charles the Twelfth had designed to give the sceptre of Poland to the prince James Sobieski, the eldest son of the late king, for whom he had a great veneration; but this prince and his brother Constantine were carried off by a party of Saxons, and conducted to a fortress in Saxony: whereupon Charles offered the crown to their younger brother Alexander, who nobly refused to take any advantage of the unhappy situation of his elder brothers.

In the year 1704, Stanislas Leczinski was deputed to make some proposals to Charles the Twelfth by the assembly at Warsaw, whose open countenance, air of frankness and probity, wisdom and moderation, and love for his country, for which he let fall now and then some words as if he was fearful of discovering his sentiments, fixed the attention of the king of Sweden. "How can we proceed to an election," said Stanislas, "whilst the princes James and Constantine Sobieski are captives?" "How can we deliver your republic," replied Charles, "if we

“do not elect a new king?” From this moment Charles resolved upon advancing Leczinski to the throne, who was soon afterwards proclaimed king. Charles now resolved to conquer Leopold, the only part of the kingdom which still continued in the interest of Augustus, and was in march towards this place; Stanislas was still at Warsaw, but was preparing to follow him, when he was informed that Augustus, who had deceived the Swedes by some forced marches, was near that capital at the head of 20,000 men, and therefore he was forced to retire with the greatest precipitation.

Pope Clement the Eleventh took the part of king Augustus, and sent briefs to all the Polish bishops, in which he threatened them with excommunication if they dared assist at the coronation of Stanislas. Every method was taken to prevent these briefs from being circulated in Poland, but without effect: they were received by a Franciscan Monk of Warsaw, with orders to distribute them secretly: he immediately sent one to the bishop of Chelm, who carried it to the king without breaking it open. Stanislas sent for the Monk, and asked him how he dared to charge himself with this distribution? I was ordered by my general to do it, said the Monk. “Retire,” said Stanislas, “and in future I order you rather to obey the orders of your king, than those of the general of the Franciscans.”

The beginning of the following year the cardinal primate, who was retired to Dantzic, was solicited to return to perform the ceremony of the coronation of Stanislas; but this prelate, whose irresolution and cowardice were equal to his baseness and ingratitude, and who endeavoured to keep upon some terms with Charles the Twelfth, with Augustus, with Stanislas, and with

the Pope, thought proper in the night to fix the pope's brief to the church doors. In vain did the magistrates endeavour to discover the authors of this act, the cardinal was very sure they would not be discovered: however this cardinal did not long survive this piece of finesse, and the kingdom was delivered from one of her wicked and turbulent sons, who had been the author of much mischief; but history is very silent when his good actions should be recorded.

The beginning of the following year Stanislas was crowned at Warsaw with great pomp and ceremony in the presence of the king of Sweden, who assisted there incognito; and having sworn the preceding day to observe the *Pacta Conventa*, the morning before he was crowned he went in great ceremony to the church of St. John; and when he was arrived near the altar the archbishop of Leopold, who performed the functions of the primate, placed himself in a large chair, and the bishop of Kaminiec addressed him in the following terms: "Our mother, the holy church, desires that this valiant knight, elected king, should be crowned." "Is he worthy of it," answered the archbishop, "and will he fulfil the duties of a king?" "He is worthy," replied the bishop, "and he will do his duty." Whereupon the king renewed his oaths upon the Evangelists, and afterwards the archbishop anointed him with holy oil. They now presented a naked sword to his majesty, who formed some crosses with it in the air, and then sheathed it: they proceeded next to crown the queen, with nearly the same ceremonies, which were followed by a *Te Deum*.

While they were divesting Augustus of the sceptre of Poland, this prince renewed the order of the White Eagle, which had the

the following device, *pour la foi, la loi, et le roi*. At this time it was only a medal which the knights wore upon the stomach, and was fixed on with a small blue ribbon; and it was not till the year 1713 that it was established in the form that it is at present.

After Charles the Twelfth had established Stanislas upon the throne of Poland, he pursued his enemy Augustus into Saxony, and soon made himself master of the greatest part of this electorate; by the different records and registers of which he discovered, that since the beginning of the war they had transported from Saxony into Poland 800 pieces of cannon, 36,600 soldiers, who were all either killed or made prisoners, together with 8,800,000 German florins: and if we add to this the immense sums which Charles the Twelfth raised in contributions while he was in this country, which were not less than ten millions of florins, it will be seen how much this electorate suffered for the ambition and wicked intentions of its master; as Charles the Twelfth would never have thought of entering into Saxony, nor even into Poland, if he had not been provoked to it by Augustus's having attacked Livonia, and entered into a league with the king of Denmark and with the czar of Moscovy to strip him of all his dominions on the east side of the Baltic.

Whilst Stanislas, supported by Charles the Twelfth, was making himself master of Poland, Augustus, to save the electorate of Saxony from ruin, was obliged to consent to a shameful peace, as hath been before observed, and even to write the following letter to compliment his successor on his coming to the throne: "We thought that it was not necessary to enter into
" any

“ any particular correspondence by letter with your majesty;
 “ nevertheless, to please the king of Sweden, and to the end
 “ that it might not be thought that we should make any
 “ difficulty to satisfy his desires, we do hereby felicitate you
 “ upon your advancement to the throne; and we do heartily
 “ wish that you may find in your country subjects more faithful
 “ than those whom we left there. All mankind will do us the
 “ justice to believe that we have been repaid with ingratitude for
 “ all the favours which we have bestowed upon Poland, and that
 “ the greatest part of our subjects took every possible measure to
 “ advance our ruin. We wish you may not be exposed to the
 “ like calamities; and recommending you to the protection of
 “ the Almighty, we remain,

“ Your brother and neighbour,

“ AUGUSTUS, Rex.”

To which Stanislas sent the following answer.

“ The correspondence of your majesty is a new obligation
 “ that I owe to the king of Sweden. I thank you for the con-
 “ gratulations you make me upon my being advanced to the
 “ throne: I hope that my subjects will have no reason to be
 “ wanting in fidelity to me, since I shall observe the laws of the
 “ kingdom.

“ STANISLAS, King of Poland.”

The wickedness and perjury of the Poles were now severely
 punished: the czar, irritated to the last degree at the peace which
 was concluded between Augustus and Charles, permitted his
 troops to make the most terrible ravages in Poland. Of 3000
 houses which composed the town of Lissa, seventeen only
 escaped

escaped the flames; and all the manufacturers, who worked on a large manufacture of cloth which was carried on in this place, were transported to Moscow. A great number of valuable pictures, statues both ancient and modern, and silver vessels, which ornamented the temples and the palaces of Warsaw, were taken down and packed up in ballots to be carried into Russia under a strong escort; but a party of the Poles, who shewed more courage than those who composed the right wing of Augustus's army, as before mentioned, attacked the Russians, and carried off this rich prize, with which Peter had designed to decorate his new residence at St. Petersburg.

The defeat of the Swedish army at Pultawa, as hath been before observed, paved the way to Augustus's re-ascension of the throne of Poland and broke the sceptre of this kingdom in the hands of Stanislas. A bull which the pope published at this time to absolve the Poles from the oaths of fidelity which they had taken to Stanislas removed the greatest difficulties; and when this prince saw that he could not retain the crown but by increasing the troubles and miseries of his country, he nobly renounced it.

In the year 1710 Frederic Augustus again mounted the throne of Poland, and by his prudence, moderation, and justice he brought the nobility back to their duty; but willing to revenge himself upon the Swedes for all the losses which he had sustained, though he had drawn all his misfortunes upon himself, he again renewed his alliance with the king of Denmark; and the forces of the two kings laid siege to Stralsund in Pomerania, but they were obliged to raise the siege for want of artillery.

In the year 1713 the king of Prussia, who was much disquieted by having such great bodies of Russian troops so near his little kingdom, entered into an alliance with the king and with the republic of Poland to drive those troublesome neighbours back into their own country, and to restore the tranquillity of the North. The Prussian monarch was in hopes that Charles the Twelfth would come into this measure, as Stanislas had consented to it and was willing to abandon the crown of Poland to quiet the divisions and disorders of his country: but Charles, to whom Stanislas made the proposal by letter, refused to enter into this alliance; so that the czar soon after became the law-giver of the North.

During three years successively Poland became again a prey to the most cruel divisions and disorders. The new Saxon troops, which Augustus had brought into the kingdom, served as a pretence for the discontented party to form new confederations, and to commit all kinds of disorders: however, by a treaty which was signed at Warsaw the 30th of January 1717, every thing was pacified.

Before this æra the troops were obliged to wait the issue of a diet, which was often dissolved without coming to any resolution, before they could obtain their pay, accruing from the taxes which were then levied on the people for this purpose; and if the collection of these taxes met with any difficulties, and was retarded, the soldiers believed themselves authorized to live at discretion upon the people. This diet declared every kind of confederacy illegal, broke the army entirely, and formed a new one, composed of national troops as well as of strangers.

The

The national troops were divided into pulks or brigades: in Poland these brigades comprehended the hussars, a kind of light-horse, composed of Polish gentlemen; the pancerns, likewise composed of the Polish nobility; and another sort of light troops, called petyhorskie. The Lithuanian army is formed of hussars and of other light troops, of some squadrons of Tartars and of Cossacks. The foreign troops in the service of Poland are some regiments of infantry and of dragoons and some companies of Hungarians. From hence it will clearly appear that the principal force of the Polish army is in their cavalry.

The funds which are allotted for the payment of these troops are, 1st. A capitation-tax, raised in due proportions upon every palatinate, so that each brigade, or each particular regiment, may draw their pay from it immediately. 2d. The hiberns and the capitation which is laid upon the Jews: this in Poland is calculated for extraordinaries. In Lithuania they raise for this purpose the hiberns, a tax upon spirituous liquors, a capitation upon the Jews, a tax upon houses, and the customs.

Besides the troubles and divisions with which this unhappy kingdom had been torn since the beginning of this century, and which were not yet subsided, in the year 1718 the Romish clergy began again to kindle a persecution against the Dissidents; those turbulent sons of wickedness, like the envious man, were content to suffer considerably that their neighbours might be effectually crushed. Augustus likewise, who, from being a zealous Lutheran, was become a bigotted Roman Catholic for the sake of the crown of Poland, in order to recommend himself to the good graces of the Pope, who had made the greatest part of the Polish nation add perjury to their other crimes to favour this prince's restoration,

restoration, joined heartily with the clergy to exclude the Dissidents from all charges of trust in the state. In the year 1661 the diet formally decided, that any Protestant subject, who was otherwise qualified, might be elected a Nonce, and exercise all the functions of this high office: this year they refused Piotrowski, the Nonce of Wielun, the privilege of giving his voice in the diet held at Grodno, because he professed the reformed religion. The taking away this privilege from the Dissidents has been the cause of all the troubles which have since reigned in this kingdom; since, as they were denied the liberty of opposing such laws as were unfavourable to them, they have been entirely crushed by them. In the diet 1733, it was enacted, that in future all the Dissidents should be excluded from the enjoyment of any places or dignities under the crown, from the nonciatures, deputations and commissions, and starosties with jurisdiction; and the diet of 1735 gave this regulation the force of a fundamental law.

Towards the end of this year Charles the Twelfth was killed in Norway, and Stanislas, to whom he had been a particular friend and benefactor, was obliged to retire out of the duchy of Deux-Ponts, which Charles had ceded to him, and which, by the death of this monarch, fell to a prince of the house of Palatine.

In the following year count Poniatowski negotiated the treaty of peace between Poland and Sweden, wherein it was stipulated that the princess Ulrick, queen of Sweden, should acknowledge Augustus, elector of Saxony, as legal king of Poland, and that she should no longer support count Stanislas Leczinski. It was likewise stipulated by this treaty, that Stanislas should retain the

name and honours of a king ; that all his hereditary property should be restored to him, and that the Poles should grant him a sufficient revenue to support his dignity ; and that all his friends and partizans should be re-invested with their respective titles, properties, and prerogatives of which they had been divested during the troubles of the state : but this treaty was not published before the following year.

Scarce were the troubles of this kingdom calmed, when an accident, trifling in itself, had nearly blown up the fire again with as much violence as ever. Under any civilized government such an affair would have been soon suppressed ; but in Poland, where an insolent nobility and a profligate clergy have no controul upon their actions, such examples of licentiousness often throw the whole kingdom into the greatest disorder.

The seals of the kingdom, to which the prince Czartoriski pretended, had been given to the prince Wiefnowiski, which had created such a hatred between these two families, that they only waited to have a proper opportunity to attack each other. A secretary of Czartoriski's was discharged by this lord for his bad behaviour, and he immediately obtained the protection of Wiefnowiski ; the former complained of this conduct, but instead of being heard, Wiefnowiski gave the secretary a place in the starosty from whence he had been discharged. As soon as Czartoriski discovered what had been done, he immediately flew to the palace of Wiefnowiski, forced open the door of his cabinet, and, not finding him, he wounded his secretary with his sabre. This difference was thought sufficient to heat all the orders of the state, who entered into this quarrel, some on one side and some on the other, according to the connections which

they had with these two families, each of which were already arming their vassals to attack each other, when the king interposed, and happily adjusted their differences, which would otherwise have kindled a civil war in the kingdom. Those insolent lords would have thought that their liberties were attacked if they had been ordered to arm their vassals in the defence of their country.

If we except some trifling persecutions against the Dissidents, the Poles after this were tolerably quiet till the year 1724, when, on account of some differences which arose between the students of the Lutheran college and those of the Jesuits college at Thorn, the whole kingdom was again thrown into an uproar. The Roman Catholics of this town, instigated by the whole body of the Jesuits, made the most bitter complaints to the diet of Warsaw against the Lutheran scholars, and against some of the magistrates of Thorn, on account of this quarrel, although the latter, to avoid giving any offence, did not at all enter into it. By the intrigues of the Jesuits, commissaries were named from among the most ignorant and bigotted of the Catholics to judge those supposed guilty persons, who heard all that the Jesuits and their party could say against the Lutheran scholars, but would hear nothing from the other party. Several of the Lutheran students were condemned to die; the president and the vice-president of the town were sentenced to be beheaded, and to have their goods confiscated, because they did not join the Jesuits party; and the burgrave and vice-burgrave were declared infamous, and rendered incapable of possessing any charge in future under the government. The Lutherans were stripped of several of their churches, and they erected a column, upon which was a statue of the Virgin Mary, in the very place where during the

the quarrel it was said they had prophaned her image. All the neighbouring princes complained loudly against the injustice of this sentence, which they pretended the Jesuits had extorted by the most infamous practices from the council of Poland. The ministers of Russia, Prussia, England, and Holland made some strong representations upon this head in favour of the Dissidents; whilst the Polish Catholics, on the other hand, made preparations for a civil war, if any foreign power should attempt to re-establish the Greeks or the Dissidents in their former privileges and prerogatives.

In the following year count Maurice of Saxony, natural son of Augustus the Second, was elected duke of Courland and Semigall by the states of the country; but this election was opposed by Russia and by the republic of Poland, because Ferdinand the uncle of the late duke was the legal heir, and had not done any act against the crown of Poland to forfeit this fief, or even to merit the displeasure of the Poles; and the king was obliged in some measure to declare the election null and illegal, and to order his son to renounce his pretensions. However Maurice refused to obey the orders of the republic, imagining in all probability that he had little to fear from that quarter, or being secretly authorized by his father to act in this manner, and attempted to support himself by force; but being overpowered by a numerous Russian army, and not well supported by the inhabitants of Courland, he was at length obliged to abandon his enterprize.

In the year 1728 a feverish disorder with which Augustus was attacked prevented the diet from assembling at Grodno; but the following year, being assembled in the same town, at the beginning
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of the diet, one of the members proposed the following question : “ Whether this diet ought to be regarded as an ordinary or as an “ extraordinary one ? ” and in support of this question he observed, that if it was to be called an ordinary diet, it was illegal, since it ought to have been holden at the end of the foregoing year ; and that if it was to be regarded as an extraordinary diet, according to the laws it ought not to continue more than fifteen days. He was answered, that the king’s illness was the only cause which retarded the diet ; but that as his majesty had proposed that this diet should be held at Grodno in the course of the same year and by the same Nonces, it ought to be regarded as an ordinary diet, and conformable in every respect to the constitution of the kingdom, except that there were any laws which were not known till now to exist which forbid the kings of Poland to fall sick. This answer not satisfying the ill humour of the before-mentioned Nonce and his party, they immediately left the assembly, which was dissolved by their retreat : this was the issue of all the diets for a great number of years.

The clergy and the turbulent part of the Polish nation being now delivered from their foreign enemies, employed their whole attention to persecute their fellow-subjects who were not of their communion, in whose defence several of the neighbouring states made strong remonstrances to the king and to the republic in the year 1731 ; whereupon Augustus gave particular orders to the primate of the kingdom and to the senators to terminate their persecutions : but this supposed condescension of the prince excited the imprudent, or rather impudent, zeal of the Pope’s Nuncio, who had the daring assurance to carry his complaints to the foot of the throne : but Augustus very properly answered him, that he was established upon the throne to protect all his subjects without

without any exception, and that he was determined to do it conformably to the laws of the kingdom.

In the year 1733 Frederic Augustus died at Warsaw on the first of February. He had a great many excellent qualities and almost as many bad ones: he was free and easy in his manner of address, and made himself agreeable to all who approached him: his talents were almost equal to the great strength of his body: he was generous, and in some measure humane; but his boundless ambition eclipsed the greatest part of his virtues. When he was only elector of Saxony he was esteemed and beloved by all his subjects, but his joining with the czar to dispossess the Swedes of all the provinces which they held on the east side of the Baltic sea, an enterprize to which those sovereigns at that time were not equal, was the cause of all the losses which his Saxon subjects sustained, of making that electorate as well as the kingdom of Poland the theatre of war, of all the scenes of bloodshed and misery which the Poles suffered upon this occasion, of the inglorious peace which he made with Charles the Twelfth at the expence of his friend and ally, and of his unworthy behaviour afterwards in breaking it; and if Providence had not otherwise disposed of Charles the Twelfth, he would again have been obliged to renounce the crown of Poland in favour of Stanislas. Augustus was certainly a good general, and active in war; but being obliged to yield to the impetuous vivacity of Charles the Twelfth, he thought the most prudent measure that he could take was to wait with patience for a favourable instant to recover himself, especially as he found the Poles, jealous of their privileges and always fearful of their pretended liberties, hated him, and were constantly opposing his most salutary measures.

One of the greatest evils that has happened to Poland since their government is become in a great measure aristocratical, has been the constant animosity and disunion which have always subsisted between the great families of the kingdom. The family of Potocki and that of Czartoriski appeared to be irreconcilable at the death of Augustus the Second, when the primate of the kingdom assembled all the senators, the ministers, and the nonces in his palace, and recommended them to divest themselves of all partiality, of animosity, and particular hatred, and only to think of the happiness and tranquillity of their country. These few words were in all appearance productive of very good effects, at least during the time of the election.

The candidates for the crown during this diet of election were king Stanislas the First; the elector of Saxony, son of the late king; the prince Ferdinand of Bavaria; don Emanuel of Portugal; the prince Wiesnowiski; the princes Sapieha and Lubomirski; the prince Poniatowski; and the chevalier de St. George, the supposed son of James the Second king of England: but the two predominant factions were that of the king Stanislas and that of the elector of Saxony.

Stanislas was elected by a considerable part of the nation; and another part, supported by the Russians and by the Imperialists, proclaimed the elector of Saxony as king of Poland, under the name of Frederic Augustus the Third.

Stanislas, with about 2000 French troops, embarked for Dantzic, which he made a place of arms; but seeing himself besieged with a powerful Russian army, and receiving no succours from his friends in Poland, he took the prudent part to retire; whereupon

whereupon Augustus the Third was soon after crowned king of Poland; but the party of Stanislas was still powerful, and resolved to traverse all his designs: however the tranquillity of the kingdom was to all appearance re-established by the treaty of peace signed between the emperor and the king of France in the year 1735, wherein it is stipulated, “ That king Stanislas the First
 “ shall abdicate the throne, but that he shall still be acknow-
 “ ledged as king of Poland and duke of Lithuania, and shall
 “ preserve all the titles and honours annexed to those dignities;
 “ that they shall restore his property, as well as that of the
 “ queen his wife, who shall have the free enjoyment and dis-
 “ position of it; that all his friends in Poland shall be re-
 “ established in all their respective titles, rights, properties, and
 “ privileges; that the elector of Saxony shall be acknowledged
 “ as king of Poland and as great duke of Lithuania by all
 “ who shall accede to this treaty of peace; that king Stanislas
 “ shall be put in peaceable possession of the duchy of Lorraine
 “ and of Bar; but that immediately after the death of this prince
 “ these duchies shall be united in full sovereignty for ever to the
 “ crown of France.”

The following year the party of Stanislas, who were still powerful, and who had received some mortifications from Augustus, began again to murmur against the government, and were ready to enter upon a civil war, when they received the following letter from that king, which gives us a strong proof of his moderation and humanity: “ I am sensibly mortified that I am
 “ not in a situation to testify sufficiently to you my sincere ac-
 “ knowledgment of all that you have done and suffered for me,
 “ nor to recompense properly your attachment to my person
 “ and interests. It has not pleased the Supreme Director of

“ human enterprizes to furnish me with an opportunity for this
 “ purpose which answered my vows and wishes; but I submit
 “ myself to the adorable judgments of Providence with humility
 “ and resignation, which have consoled me and supported me in
 “ my adversity. If you will follow the advice of him who will
 “ never cease to love you, follow my example. In respect to
 “ the higher powers, for the love of whom you have taken up
 “ arms, lay down your arms, and by your peaceable conduct
 “ shew them that you are not desirous of perpetuating the dis-
 “ union of your fellow-citizens; on the contrary, unite
 “ yourselves with them, to the end that you may all enjoy
 “ that peace which God has been pleased to grant to your dear
 “ country.”

In the year 1737 Ferdinand, reigning duke of Courland, and
 the last male heir of the family of Kettler, died at Mittau.
 This duchy, as I have already observed, was a fief of the crown
 of Poland, and was granted to Godhard Kettler and his male
 heirs in the year 1561 as a recompence for Livonia, which, as
 grand master of the Teutonic Order, he ceded to this crown.
 This death, in any other circumstances, would in all probability
 have given rise to a new war in the North; for it was enacted
 by the diet of Poland in the year 1726, that the duchy of Courland
 should be re-united to the crown of Poland in default of male heirs
 in the family of Kettler: but by the 269th article of the constitu-
 tion of the diet of 1736, all that was enacted in the year 1726 re-
 specting this matter was repealed, and the nobility of this pro-
 vince, by virtue of their contracts of subjection and of the form
 of government then established in the duchy, were permitted to
 elect a new duke, to whom the king engaged to give the investiture
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of the duchy for himself and for his successors by the act of subjection of the year 1561.

In consequence of this regulation the states of Courland and of Semigall, through the intrigues of the empress of Russia, elected John Ernest Biron, a native of Courland and a person of mean birth, to be their duke, because he was great chamberlain and favourite of the empress. There are few examples in history of a person's having been raised so rapidly from a mean and obscure situation to be sovereign of the country in which he was born, especially when such a person possesseth none of those great qualities to recommend him which are ornamental to human nature. Nature, it is true, gave Biron a strong constitution, and he had the good fortune to please the empress Ann of Russia, by whose influence, and by the condescension of Poland, from a simple individual he was raised, not only to be the sovereign of the country wherein he was born, but to be regent of the Russian empire.

Such a sudden and uncommon elevation was enough to turn the head of a person who had more philosophy and fortitude than Biron, and therefore the faults which he afterwards committed in the administration of the affairs of this empire were in some measure pardonable: however he was severely punished for his indiscretion, to give it no worse a name, by a long and rigorous exile; from which he was afterwards recalled, and peaceably seated in his states, as if nothing had passed: such are the common vicissitudes of fortune in the North.

The following year an accident happened at Warsaw which had nearly been the occasion of a civil war, and which will con-

tribute to give us a perfect idea of the character of the Polish nobility. Count Bruhl, master of the horse to the king, going out of the king's palace in his coach was stopt by the coach of the great treasurer of the crown, and as the count was in one of the king's coaches he supposed that he ought not to give way to that of the treasurer, who, on the other hand, ordered his coachman to keep his station. A Polish gentleman who was in the treasurer's train, wishing to finish the contest immediately, ran up to the count's postilion, and gave him a blow with his sabre; whereupon the count put his head out of the coach-door, and asked, "Whether the treasurer had given orders for insulting him in this manner?" He had scarce time to draw his head again into the coach, after he had finished these words, before the sabre was ready to fall upon it; and as the Pole missed his blow by the count's activity, he cut off a large piece of the ornament of the coach-door. This affair made a great noise, and different parties were immediately formed in consequence of it. In any civilized country such an outrage would have been punished with the greatest severity, and the treasurer would have been displaced; but in Poland, where he immediately formed a party who were ready to embrace their hands in their country's blood, the king was obliged in good policy to hide his resentment, to let this insolent Pole go unpunished, and to caress the treasurer as if nothing had happened.

In the year 1739 the ordinary diet of Poland, which had treated of the most interesting affairs respecting the safety and welfare of the kingdom, was dissolved by the animosity and hatred which the parties of this country generally entertain the one

one against the other, and for which they sacrifice the general good and welfare of their country.

The emperor of Germany and the empress of Russia were at this time at war with the Turks, and the situation of Poland was so critical during this war, that several of the Polish patriots, since the diet was dissolved without coming to any decision upon the state of the public affairs, entered into a confederacy to secure the repose of the republic and to guard themselves against the horrors of the war which were approaching near to their frontiers; and in consequence thereof sent a deputation to Constantinople to make the following proposition to the Sultan, and to treat with his ministers upon each article respectively.—1st. “With the consent of some senators and other nobles of Poland, who are entered into a confederacy for the public good, and with whose letters we are furnished, we are come to treat with the sublime Ottoman Porte.” Answer. “The letters of those senators testify that we may give credit to their bearers; and we will give credit to what you shall verbally propose.”—2d. “The republic of Poland demands that the peace which was concluded with the sublime Porte by the treaty of Carlowitz, be faithfully and inviolably observed.” Answer. “The ministers of the Porte have constantly employed all their attention that this treaty should be strictly observed.”—3d. “The republic desires to be in friendship with the friends of the Porte, and be the enemy of her enemies; and that the Porte will observe the same measures with regard to the republic.” Answer. “The Porte consents to this demand; and when she shall be positively assured that the Poles are entered into an association, the Sultan will give orders that his army shall join the Polish army, and that they shall act

“in

“ in concert upon all occasions.”—4th. “ In consequence of
 “ this confederacy and alliance, we the confederated senators,
 “ &c. desire the Porte to lend us 3 or 400,000 ducats of Hun-
 “ gary to augment the Polish army, which sum the Porte shall
 “ receive from the contributions which this army shall raise in
 “ the Russian territories.” Answer. “ As soon as the Porte
 “ shall be positively assured that the Poles are confederated, they
 “ shall be assisted with the sum demanded, and the time and
 “ place shall be immediately regulated for the payment thereof.”
 —5th. “ The republic demands, that the sublime Porte will
 “ support an army of 50,000 men, of Turks and of Tartars,
 “ near to Choczin and near Soroka, to succour the Poles in
 “ case of an invasion.” Answer. “ This army shall be on their
 “ march in the beginning of the next spring, with orders to
 “ assist the Poles wherever such assistance may be wanting. The
 “ Kan and the Seraskier of the Budziac Tartars shall join their
 “ troops to this army if it is necessary; and the artillery, which
 “ the Poles demand, shall be furnished them upon their own
 “ security.”—6th. “ The Porte is desired to engage the crown
 “ of Sweden to send into Poland, by Dantzic, 10,000 infantry
 “ and 500 officers to discipline the Polish army.” Answer.
 “ The republic may address the crown of Sweden herself for
 “ that purpose.”—7th. “ The Porte is desired to aid the Poles
 “ to recover the provinces which have been dismembered from
 “ her, without pretending to any other recompence for this
 “ service than the booty which shall be taken from the enemy,
 “ which shall be divided equally between the troops of the
 “ Porte and the troops of the republic.” Answer. “ The Porte
 “ will assist the republic to recover their losses, and will always
 “ be ready to assist the Poles whenever such assistance shall be
 “ wanting.”—8th. “ The Porte is likewise desired to give

“ particular orders that their troops shall observe a strict discipline
“ when they are upon the territories of Poland.” Answer.
“ The Porte will give orders that this article shall be strictly
“ observed.”

This confederacy however did not produce any great effects: the scheme was soon after discovered, and Augustus, from the moment he was informed of it, violated all the measures already taken by the confederacy. It appears from the nature of the preceding articles, that the associated senators and others meant well to their country, but it was a very serious affront to the king to carry on a treaty of this nature with a foreign power without his knowledge or approbation, and the consequences might have been dreadful to Poland, and of no great utility to the Ottoman Porte.

Ever since the nobility and clergy came to have an independent power in this kingdom, their government has been a continued scene of confusion, disorder, oppression, and civil wars, from which the state has suffered more than from all their foreign wars. The losses which a nation sustains from a foreign enemy may in time be recovered, but when her own subjects are seeking her destruction, there is no remedy.

In the year 1740 the king convoked a diet to assemble at Warsaw, wherein it was proposed, among other things, to hear and to redress the grievances of the nation; and the king, as preliminaries, recommended the discussion of the three following articles, of peace, of security, and of abundance, as the only means to re-establish the weakened forces of the republic: “ There is no kingdom,” said the great chancellor, “ can subsist
“ and

“ and flourish where good order and decency are not supported;
“ and it is impossible to succour our country by the establishment
“ of good order, if we do not endeavour, in the first place, to
“ conform ourselves exactly to that which is prescribed for
“ holding the diets by the constitutions of the years 1690, 1699,
“ and 1736, so that his majesty recommends the observation of
“ these constitutions to all the Nonces: moreover, there cannot
“ be a greater insult offered to your liberties and to your free-
“ dom of speech, than when you are assembled in the places
“ which are appointed for holding the diets and other public
“ assemblies, your not giving each other the liberty to speak and
“ to explain your sentiments freely; and sometimes you carry
“ your hatred against each other to such a height, that it is
“ dangerous even to appear in those assemblies. We have a
“ thousand examples to prove that the dignity of a senator is
“ no longer respected; and therefore that ancient and rigorous
“ law, which obliges the senators to be present at these diets,
“ cannot be observed: from hence it arises that these assemblies,
“ being destitute of that air which inspires veneration and
“ respect, are little more than a continued scene of noise, tumult,
“ and disorder. Is it possible therefore that any salutary
“ advice can proceed from such a source of confusion? En-
“ deavour then, my brave Poles, to find out some remedy for
“ these evils. To live in peace with foreign powers ought to be
“ the first object of your deliberations; and that depends upon pre-
“ serving tranquillity in your own neighbourhood; upon having
“ good intelligence and a free communication with your neigh-
“ bours; and particularly upon that spirit of justice and modera-
“ tion that often dissipates the greatest difficulties, which are
“ but too subject to arise upon the frontiers of many powerful
“ states. The security of the public requires that you answer
“ the

“ the demands of the Palatines for the augmentation of the
 “ troops, and the exact payment of the soldiers, upon which
 “ depends the military discipline; that you provide for the re-
 “ pairs of the fortresses, and for filling the military magazines
 “ and arsenals; that you prepare a fund for disengaging the
 “ territory and the town of Elbing from the family of Branden-
 “ bourg, one of the most important places we have upon our
 “ frontiers; and lastly, that you will apply yourselves to prevent
 “ the desertion of the subjects of Poland into Walachia and into
 “ the Ukraine. To increase the riches and abundance of a
 “ state, the best regulations touching foreign commerce, and
 “ the fixing a proper standard for the money, should be adopted.
 “ Good merchants are wanting in Poland, and some of these should
 “ have been established in the different cities of the kingdom;
 “ but as the greatest part of our cities are likewise falling into
 “ ruin, it is necessary also that you should provide for their
 “ security. I should have observed, that the decay of your cities
 “ arises from the persecutions which have lately been raised
 “ against the Dissidents, which have driven great numbers of
 “ those people out of the kingdom; from the disunion and dis-
 “ order which reign there; and from the citizens not being able
 “ to provide themselves a subsistence, occasioned by the malicious
 “ inventions of the Jews who are protected by the nobility, by
 “ enormous usury, and by the little security which they have
 “ for transporting merchandizes from one place to another on
 “ account of custom-houses and new duties which have been
 “ lately introduced. It will be necessary that you should more-
 “ over take into consideration the fixing a proper standard for the
 “ gold and silver coin, which have been of late years so much
 “ adulterated; the re-establishing and working the mines of
 “ Olkhurst, which have been neglected for a considerable time

“ past ; the providing for the security of the high roads, and for
 “ the establishing new manufactures in the kingdom, which will
 “ prevent great sums of money from passing daily into foreign
 “ parts for these articles.”

I have been the more particular in setting forth this speech at length, because it gives us a clear idea of the situation of the kingdom at this time, and corroborates what I have before observed, touching the horrid abuses and acts of oppression which were every day practised by the nobility and clergy.

The first part of this diet presented a very favourable aspect ; it appeared as if unanimity had banished all kinds of discord and confusion, and as if the Nonces had sacrificed their personal interests to the good of the public. But alas ! this scene was soon changed ; the Poles were so accustomed to disorder and violence, that it was almost become a part of their constitution : little clouds gathered successively, and formed a storm that destroyed all the operations of this diet, which terminated, as most of the former had done, in the greatest confusion and disorder, notwithstanding all that the chancellor had observed to recommend unanimity and good order among them. The following year Poland was in such an embarrassment that the greatest politicians were at a loss to discover what part she would take in the wars and contests which then began to trouble the different parts of Europe. Silesia was now become the theatre of war, which made the government resolve immediately to send some Polish regiments to the frontiers ; but seeing the severity of the Prussian discipline they soon perceived that this precaution was unnecessary, and, confiding in the promises of the court of Berlin, from whom they were informed that their territories

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should

should be respected during the whole war, to grant some return to the good intentions of his Prussian majesty, they permitted that his army in Silesia should draw such part of their provisions out of the Polish territories as they thought proper.

When the senate saw that there was no longer danger on that side, they turned their attention towards the differences which had arisen between the court of Russia and the Ottoman Porte; but these were soon afterwards conciliated, and the republic was thought to be out of danger from foreign enemies, when the news was received that the Russians and Swedes were preparing to declare war against each other; whereupon two parties were immediately formed in the kingdom, the one in favour of Sweden and the other in favour of Russia, and this division was likely to be attended with the most disagreeable consequences. Count Potocki, general of the crown, declared himself for the Swedes; and, to give the greater weight to the cause which he pretended to defend, he resolved to form a general confederacy, and addressed letters to all the members of the diet, filled with the most plausible reasons, to engage them to vote for the augmentation of the army.

As soon as the king, who was now at Dresden, heard of the measures that Potocki was taking, he immediately sent deputies to him, to represent to him the new troubles that might be occasioned thereby, and the necessity the kingdom was in to maintain an exact neutrality during this war. The deputies of the king, and particularly the cardinal Lipski, represented this matter with such force and clearness to the general and his friends, that the former consented to send the troops into quarters, and to countermand those who were upon their march to form a camp;

and the same example was followed by Romanowski, who was elected marshal of the confederacy, and by all the rest of their party. Thus was the public tranquillity again restored, and in order to confirm it there was an assembly of all the senators held, where the primate of the kingdom presided in the king's absence, and where it was resolved, 1st. "To desire the general of the crown, "not only to give the necessary orders for all the regiments to "be completed, but also to send a certain number of troops "towards the frontiers on the side of Silesia, of Courland, and "of Turkey." 2d. "To give orders to the commissioners of "Courland to instal the duke of Brunswic in quality of duke "of Courland, and not to defer the execution of it, to the end "that the great duchess of Russia may be thereby engaged to "withdraw her troops which are at present quartered in Cour- "land." 3d. "To give the inhabitants of Great Poland "permission to furnish the Austrian troops with provisions as "well as those of Prussia, but at their own risk and peril." 4th. "To order the resident of the republic at the Ottoman Porte "to renew his solicitations to obtain satisfaction for the losses "which the kingdom suffered by the passage of the Ottoman "troops during the last war."

As the second article of the resolution of this assembly demands some explanation, it will be necessary to observe, that when the empress Ann, a few days before her death, called the young prince Iwan, the son of her niece and of the duke of Brunswic, to the throne of Russia, who was then but two months old, she declared her favourite Biron, duke of Courland, guardian of the young emperor, and regent of the empire; but such an excessive authority, with so weak a head, could not continue long in such a turbulent country as that of Russia, and this duke was soon after

after arrested by the order of the duke and duchess of Brunswic, the father and mother of the young emperor, and conducted to the fortress of Schlusselfbourg: he was afterwards, according to the Russian laws, found guilty of the crime of high treason in the first instance, and condemned to lose his life; but this part of his sentence was changed into that of a perpetual banishment into Siberia. This prompt and astonishing revolution left Courland without a sovereign; for it was not to be presumed that a person who was banished into Siberia could preserve any rights to the sovereignty of Courland, and therefore the states of this duchy assembled themselves, and after having erased the name of Biron from the list of their dukes, they unanimously elected the prince Lewis of Brunswic Lunebourg, the uncle of the young emperor, to be their duke: and it was in consequence of this election, supported by the credit of the court of Russia, that the states of Courland sent a solemn deputation to the king of Poland, who was then at Dresden, with such instructions as merit so much the more to be preserved, as they set forth very clearly the privileges of this state, and its dependence upon the king and upon the republic of Poland: they are given in nearly the following terms: 1st. “ After the deputy of the states shall
 “ have presented to his Polish majesty, our most gracious king
 “ and lord, our ardent wishes for the happiness and prosperity
 “ of his most sacred person and of all his royal family, he shall
 “ thank his majesty, in the most submissive terms, for supporting
 “ the rights and privileges of the duchies, and also for the
 “ assurances which it has pleased his majesty heretofore to send
 “ to the members of the states to inform them that he would
 “ support them in all their respective immunities; afterwards he
 “ shall assure his majesty, in the most respectful manner, of
 “ their inviolable fidelity, and also of the great confidence which
 “ they

“ they place in his clemency and good will towards them.”
2d. “ He shall humbly desire his majesty to hear the reasons
“ which induced them to hold the present assembly, and that
“ he will be pleased to consent that their patriotic en-
“ deavours may have the desired effect, to the end that the
“ states, enjoying their rights and liberties, may remain in their
“ antecedent form of regency under the high protection of his
“ majesty and the republic.” 3d. “ The deputy shall also re-
“ present to his majesty, that the most serene duke Lewis of
“ Brunswic Lunebourg, passing by Mittau during the time that
“ the states were assembled in his road to St. Peteribourg, pro-
“ posed himself as a candidate for these duchies, to the end that
“ this state might be preserved under the regency of a prince ;
“ but the states, to give the most convincing proofs of their in-
“ violable fidelity and of their duty towards the king and to-
“ wards the republic of Poland, did not believe themselves
“ authorized to declare their sentiments finally upon this pro-
“ position before it was approved of by his majesty as their
“ sovereign lord :—and, finally, the deputy shall humbly intreat
“ his majesty to invest the before-mentioned prince with this
“ fief, as he has offered to support the inhabitants of the country
“ in all their liberties and privileges, and to deliver these duchies
“ from all the burthens with which they are charged, as well
“ as from all the pretensions which strangers may have to them,
“ which will be much for the advantage of the crown and of the
“ republic of Poland.”

In the year 1742 the nobility of Poland wished ardently to have an extraordinary diet convoked at Grodno, and made the most powerful efforts to induce his majesty to consent to their desires ; they founded their representations upon the importance
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of the affairs which they proposed to regulate in it, and particularly upon those of Courland, and upon the augmentation of the fortifications of Choczin, which had been ruined by the Russians, and which the Turks were about to repair. This was the pretext which was publicly given, but the true reason of this demand was the strong interest which a great part of the nation took to support the empress-queen of Hungary, whom they regarded as the right hand of Poland, and as her shield when any difference arose between the republic and the Ottoman Porte: how well they judged of the favourable disposition of this empress towards them and of her sincerity and gratitude, we have had a very recent and extraordinary example. However, by means of the arrangements which they had secretly taken, they were in hopes to pass the proposition for giving some considerable succours to this empress, or at least to make the assembly consent to permit a Russian army to pass through their territories, if the new empress Elizabeth should determine to march such an army into Germany to succour the house of Austria.

With regard to the affairs of Courland the republic was not less divided: the state of affairs was entirely changed in Russia since the empress Elizabeth was come to the throne: duke Lewis of Brunswic was no longer protected by that court: however, some of the Poles were for supporting that prince in Courland; others were of the opinion that the states of Courland should proceed to a new election, and that they should favour the prince of Hesse-Homberg, who was protected and openly recommended by the court of Russia; whilst a third party, with a great number of the Courland nobility, maintained that they ought to recal and maintain the ancient election made in favour of count Maurice of Saxony. Hearing of the divisions and animosities which

which were likely to arise among the nobles on account of the matters which were to be decided in this extraordinary diet, the king postponed the calling a diet till the year 1744, when he ordered a general diet at Grodno, and in the mean time he ordered a Senatus Consilium at Frawstadt, where he appeared in person, and the following articles were the result of their deliberations, of which copies were delivered to all the members of the assembly:—“ 1st. The indispensable necessity of the present war in Germany, and the desire which the king has to re-establish as soon as possible the peace of Europe, will not permit him to be absent from his hereditary dominions. His majesty takes this opportunity particularly to inform the Palatines and the great officers of the state, that although he is obliged to be absent from the kingdom for some time, he shall nevertheless take every measure to preserve the state in tranquillity, and to provide for the security of his subjects; and that all the steps which he shall take for this purpose will be concerted with the principal members of the kingdom.—2d. As the present situation of the affairs of Europe demand more than ever that we should send ministers to the foreign courts, to the end that we may live in tranquillity and good neighbourhood with them, the king will name without any delay such persons as he shall judge capable for these important points. The republic shall give for the expences of the embassy into Turkey 6000 crowns, of which two thirds shall be paid by the treasury of the kingdom and the other third by that of the great duchy of Lithuania: 2000 crowns shall likewise be added to this for the ordinary presents, which shall be paid out of the treasury of the kingdom; and the treasurer shall also furnish 4000 Polish florins for the ordinary presents of the minister who shall go into the Crimnee. Six thousand crowns should also be given to the minister who shall be sent to the court of Russia;

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the treasurer of the great duchy of Lithuania should pay two thirds of this sum, and that, of the kingdom the other third: this minister shall be charged with giving assurance to the court of Peterbourg of the friendship of the Polish nation, and likewise shall endeavour to obtain full satisfaction for those who have suffered any damages, of which the commission of Satanow has already began to pay a part; he shall moreover be instructed to solicit the court of Russia that the insolence of the Cossacks may be restrained.—3d. To maintain the security of the kingdom from foreign forces, the king agrees with the generals that it will be necessary to march an army of observation to the frontiers, and to fortify such places as shall be necessary to protect the kingdom from the inroads of foreign troops. His majesty will not fail to solicit all the belligerent powers to protect the liberty of commerce in the Baltic sea; and he will also enjoin all the generals and starosts to carry the orders of the Senatus Consilium of the year 1739 into execution by virtue of the constitution of 1620.—4th. The king not being in a situation, on account of the present war, to provide for all the expences which will be necessary for the reparations of Kaminiac, his majesty will give orders to the treasurers of the kingdom to pay 16,000 florins of Poland to make such reparations as are the most necessary to this fortress.—5th. The treasurer of the kingdom shall be ordered to pay 8000 Polish florins to the town of Frawstadt, as an indemnification for the sums which were advanced by that town for the last Turkish embassy. After the sums before specified for the foreign ministers are paid, his majesty hereby orders the payment, out of the first revenues which shall enter into the treasury of the kingdom, of 88,000 florins of Poland to the palatine of Kiovia, general of the crown, to indemnify

demnify him for an equal sum which he has advanced for the use of the public."

In the year 1744 there was a general diet held at Grodno in Lithuania, which was opened with all the ordinary ceremonies and with all the appearances of the most happy success: count Opinski was unanimously elected marshal of the diet, and for several days all the Nonces appeared desirous to promote the good of their country, to support the peace of the kingdom, to hear and to redress the complaints of particulars, and to regulate effectually the interior as well as the exterior affairs of the kingdom; but all these splendid appearances vanished very soon, as the enemies of the repose of this kingdom had determined that this diet, as well as all those which had been held since Charles the Twelfth was in Poland, should be tumultuous, and that all their good intentions should be frustrated. Wilczewski, Nonce of Wisna, accused the ministers of the king of Prussia, residing at the court of Poland, with having corrupted eight or nine of the Nonces to protest against the proceedings of the rest of the assembly, and to dissolve the diet; and that they had offered him 3000 ducats and a colonel's commission, with other advantages, if he would join those Nonces for this purpose; all which he offered to verify upon oath. The whole assembly was thrown into an uproar and confusion by this declaration; and the marshal of the diet, seeing that it was afterwards impossible to restore good order and decorum therein, dissolved it; after which the most urgent affairs of the kingdom were regulated by a Senatus Consultum, wherein a gratification of 2000 crowns was assigned to the Nonce Wilczewski for the good offices which he had rendered to his country.

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The intelligent part of mankind will undoubtedly be amazed that a prince whose family has received their all, except the lakes and sand-banks of Brandenburg, from the crown of Poland, should on every occasion endeavour to destroy that power to which he and his ancestors have been so much obliged; but by recurring to history it will be clearly seen, that this now illustrious family, from the time that they were first distinguished among the common robbers who hid their plunder in the marshes of Brandenburg down to this day, have adhered so closely to the serpent's politics, that they have always stung the bosom which warmed and supported them; and therefore we ought not to wonder at any thing that arises from such a source, except acts of humanity and of benevolence, which do not appear to enter at all into his creed.

No sooner was this diet dissolved, than the same spirit of party which had contributed much to its dissolution diffused itself throughout the whole nation, and the friends of the different powers that were engaged in the war used their utmost endeavours clandestinely to draw their partizans into a confederation; and this was declared to be the reason that induced the empress of Russia, in the year 1745, to present by her ministers the following declaration to the king and to the republic of Poland; a declaration which is so much the more remarkable, as being the first of the kind that ever the government of Russia presented to this kingdom:—"As her imperial majesty of all the Russias, "in the quality of a sincere ally, will never cease to take a "part, not only in the prosperity and repose of this kingdom, "but also in the preservation of her rights and liberties; and "that, as well on account of maintaining a good neighbour- "hood, as in consideration of the friendship which has happily
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“ subsisted for a great number of years between her imperial
 “ majesty and the king and the republic of Poland ; it is there-
 “ fore with much displeasure that her imperial majesty has dis-
 “ covered that some ill-disposed persons are endeavouring to
 “ draw the principal inhabitants of the republic into con-
 “ federacies, so that she cannot avoid making known how
 “ much it will be disagreeable to her if such disorders and
 “ troubles are excited so near to her frontiers. Her imperial
 “ majesty, as she has already observed, is too much interested
 “ in every thing that concerns the security of his Polish majesty,
 “ as well as the repose, happiness, and liberty of the republic,
 “ to regard any attack made upon either with indifference ; and
 “ therefore, to give a new mark of her pacific sentiments,
 “ and of her sincere attachment to the king and to the republic
 “ of Poland, her imperial majesty has ordered her ministers
 “ residing at Warsaw to declare to the king and to the republic,
 “ by these presents, that she will never suffer the least af-
 “ fociation, trouble, or innovation against the person of his
 “ Polish majesty, or against the republic, or even against the
 “ rights and liberties, of whom, by whom, or under what
 “ pretence soever they may be formed or excited ; but on the
 “ contrary her imperial majesty, to obviate these inconveniencies,
 “ will not fail to take all the convenient measures which Pro-
 “ vidence has put in her power.”

In the year 1746 the king convoked a diet to Warsaw to en-
 deavour if possible to remedy the growing evils of the state ; but
 no sooner was this diet assembled, than by the under-hand
 dealings of the prince before-mentioned, whose ministers had
 gained over some of the Nonces to their party, it became a scene
 of confusion and disorder, and was dissolved by the *Liberum*
Veto,

Veto, that support, as it is called, of the Polish liberty, but which is constantly made use by evil-disposed persons to trouble the happiness of the state, and which has been one of the principal causes of bringing this kingdom to the distressed situation it is in at present.

In the year 1748 the army of the crown was reduced to a few regiments only, and these in the greatest disorder; the taxes were multiplied and very unjustly collected; the poor were oppressed, and the commerce of the kingdom reduced to the lowest ebb and in the hands of the Jews; the public treasure was exhausted, and, in fact, the republic suffered on every side: but all these considerations, which were laid before the diet at Warsaw this year, were not sufficient to engage them to concur in applying a proper remedy to these disorders. This assembly, always tumultuous, spent the time which was prescribed for the duration of the diet in vain declamations and invectives, so that the marshal was obliged to dissolve it.

This was the fifth diet which had been convoked and dissolved without coming to any resolution in the space of ten years; nevertheless the republic never enjoyed a more proper crisis to enter upon useful deliberations, and to apply proper remedies to the disorders of the state; but so long as she carries the seeds of her destruction in her own bosom, and so long as the Liberum Veto is regarded as the foundation of her happiness, dissention will always reign in her diets; and the gold drawn out of the sand-banks of Brandenburg, and given to one false brother, will always triumph over the zeal, activity, and generous sentiments of a thousand honest Poles, as long as there is one ambitious usurper at Potzdam or near Vienna.

Afflicted

Afflicted and chagrined at the bad success of the preceding diets, the king imagined that by convoking an extraordinary diet the following year he should be able to remedy the greatest part if not all of those evils wherewith the country was threatened; and for this purpose he immediately published an order, wherein, after having set forth the distressed situation of the republic, he plainly informed them that he knew the hand which had directed the blow against the constitution, and conjured his faithful subjects to open their eyes upon the true interests of their country.

The friends of the prince before-mentioned, seeing themselves and their patron so clearly distinguished in this piece, which was published by the court, were highly offended against the step which the king had taken, and from that moment resolved to oppose even all the salutary measures which should be proposed in the next diet.

Towards the end of the last year an extraordinary court of justice was held at Petrikaw, composed of the deputies of the nobility of the province, who were to decide a contest which had arisen about a fief to which two noble families claimed a title, at the opening of which such a scene passed as was capable of bringing on a civil war in all parts of the kingdom. A great number of the nobility of the first rank, and as well of those who had been elected Nonces for the approaching diet, being assembled at Petrikaw to elect the marshal of this tribunal, they entered into the parish church, according to custom, to take the oath which had always been taken on these occasions. The deputies were the first who presented themselves to take this oath, but the nobility, who were there in a great number, protested

tested against the validity of their elections; murmurings ensued, and afterwards some strong debates, which finished by brandishing and by a general clash of sabres in the air. The nobles immediately separated themselves, and arranged themselves on the side of those of the family of Potocki, and the others on the side of those of Czartorinski. The partizans of Potocki, who were the first who drew their sabres, spread such a panic among their adversaries, that they immediately endeavoured to save themselves wherever they thought they were secure. The clergy, who were shut up in the vestry-room, were deliberating upon the means to appease this tumult, when they saw it cease of itself, because there was only one party now in the church. An affair of this nature, of which the annals of Poland did not to that time furnish an example, demanded the king's presence to prevent the consequences. An express was immediately sent to Dresden to desire he would return into his kingdom as soon as possible; but notwithstanding the assurance which his majesty gave of his intention to be at Warsaw with all convenient expedition, the chiefs of these two great families took the field, each at the head of a great number of vassals, and began to commit acts of hostility reciprocally upon the lands of each other. This will serve to shew us to what a height of insolence, disorder, and barbarity the nobility of Poland are arrived, and how dangerous it is to give such an independent power to individuals in a state: where the members of an aristocratical government have not some formidable controul over their actions, such a government will exhibit a continued scene of disorder, tyranny, and oppression. All the senators and generals could do in this extremity was to assemble all the regular troops, and to give orders for raising recruits to make them complete. Things were carried to this terrible point of disunion when the adverse parties

Colacks
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were informed of the death of count Potocki, who was so distinguished by his high birth, great property, and credit in the republic, that he often balanced the royal authority: this event suspended the operations of the two armies of Potocki and of Czartorinski, and hastened the return of his majesty into the kingdom. The success of a diet will in some measure depend upon the abilities of the marshal, and therefore the court were not ignorant how much it was for their interest to make choice of one who was really a friend to his country, and therefore they turned their attention towards the count Rzewski, palatine of Podolia; but his high dignity as palatine excluded him from this office, as he could not be elected Nonce. This count, however, who was ready to second the good intentions of the king, resigned his office of palatine, or, what we may more properly call in English, lord lieutenant, and was elected Nonce of Chelm. This generous action it was supposed would have facilitated his election to the dignity of marshal, especially as the happy success of the diet of pacification of the year 1736 was owing to his prudence: but all that could be said in favour of Rzewski served only to animate the enemies of the public tranquillity the more against him, particularly the Prussian party, who were determined to prevent the diet from deciding any thing that tended to promote the interest and happiness of the kingdom. This extraordinary assembly of the states therefore was opened with the difficulties which the Prussian party made to acknowledge the Nonce of Chelm to be one of their legal members; and the debates which were occasioned by it continued during the whole time that was prescribed by the laws for holding an extraordinary diet, and it separated, as all the ordinary diets had done for some time before, without coming to any resolution, and the kingdom was in a greater disorder than ever, as the

Cossacks

Cossacks had attacked the Polish part of the Ukraine, and laid waste the whole country; they pillaged the villages, burnt the churches, and massacred all those who fell into their hands indiscriminately, women, children, old men, clergy, and even those who were sick and maimed. The troops which were placed to secure the frontiers did all they could to stop the torrent of these barbarians; but those forces were not proper to oppose an enemy, which, like the Indians, attack you by surprize, and when they meet with any resistance retire with great precipitation, and endeavour to draw their adversaries into ambuscades.

In the year 1751 the Menonites, whose number is very considerable in Dantzic, complained heavily to the magistrates of this town of being deprived of many of their privileges, and seeing that their representations were disregarded, addressed his Polish majesty to obtain redress for their grievances; and at the same time the Anabaptists took the same step towards the throne: the former were strongly recommended by the regency of Dantzic, and had their complaints redressed; but the latter had the mortification to hear that they were no longer to be considered as citizens of the republic, but were to be regarded only upon the footing of strangers.

A violent storm likewise fell this year upon the Jews who were in this nation: a royal commission was sent to Kaminiac to examine several accusations that were brought against the Jews, and finding them to be well founded, it was ordered by a decree that these Israelites should quit this town and its suburbs within twenty-four hours; which order they were obliged strictly to obey. A sentence of the same nature was likewise pronounced

against these people by the regency of Warsaw, and in several other palatinates of the kingdom and of the great duchy of Lithuania. It is said that the true cause of these rigorous sentences was their having attempted something against the interests of the suits; but however they afterwards made such interest as to escape the blow which was aimed at them. Many of the most sensible men of the Polish nation have found much difficulty to resolve, whether the Jews are useful to this kingdom, or the contrary; and whether their total expulsion would be advantageous or prejudicial to the nation in general. Many have been of the opinion that if the Jews were driven out of the lands of the republic, as they have the principal branches of the commerce of the country in their hands, this act of rigour would be the ruin of a great number of Polish families, whose fortune is in a great measure connected with that of these unhappy people; but if the Jews had been driven out of the kingdom, although many of the Polish families might be distressed by it for some time, the loss would be very soon recovered by the necessity which the Poles would be under to carry on themselves all the different branches of their commerce, of which the gains have heretofore come into the coffers of those avaricious factors. No nation will ever be opulent which leaves her commerce in the hands of strangers.

The greatest part of this and of the following year was employed in settling the differences between the magistrates and the rest of the citizens of Dantzic. This affair would have been attended with very serious consequences if the king had not interposed and made use of great moderation to settle it. The magistrates were accused with having usurped the privileges of the other tribunals, and the whole city was ready for a revolt; the

the principal citizens would give up nothing of their pretensions, the workmen refused to work for their masters, and this confusion and anarchy was very near terminating by the blood of the citizens, when a commission named by the king re-established the laws in their former vigour and restored the public tranquillity: the magistrates were condemned to pay a considerable fine and all the expences of the suit; the council of fifty was dissolved, and four members of the great council and six deputies of the inferior council were ordered to go and ask pardon of the king for their disobedience.

Before the holding of a diet in Poland it has always been customary to assemble a Kolo, as it is called, or a great military council, to choose Nonces to represent the army in this great assembly of the nation, and to lay before it such matters as they shall judge to be convenient and necessary to the wants of the army: in consequence of this regulation the count Branicki assembled this year all the principal officers of the army at Droycain for this purpose. The success of this assembly, and the tranquillity which reigned in every part of the kingdom during the election of the Nonces, gave great hopes that the future diet, which was to be holden towards the end of this year, would terminate happily, and that the useful regulations which might be made by this assembly would tend to re-establish good order and tranquillity in the kingdom; but all the honest Poles were disappointed in their expectations; the ancient Prussian cabal was still kept up, and took every opportunity to blow up the fire of discord between the different parties, and to instigate them to take vengeance for every supposed injury.

The following protest will verify what has been said, and give my readers a clearer idea than perhaps they have hitherto had of the infamous abuses which have been made of the pretended liberties of the Poles.—“ I the undersigned Casimir Moriski, Nonce of the district of Sochaczew, present myself in my proper person, and protest before God and all the universe, that I am not seduced by any particular interest, but am excited by the love of my country, of which all the regulations of the diet of 1690 are violated. At the opening of the diet we joined ourselves with the senate to salute the king our gracious master, but, as was the case in the preceding diets, they have prevented us from speaking against the violation of the Pacta Conventa, and only permitted one Nonce of every province to speak, though we have not been satisfied, on the part of his majesty, upon any of the propositions which were made. When we returned into the house of the Nonces we complained that the fundamental laws of the kingdom were broken, even in the order of diets, as well as the principal regulations which were made in the years 1607, 1641, 1707, and 1736, concerning the reduction of the foreign troops conformably to the laws: the principal officers of the army are Dissidents; the disposition of the revenues of the state and of the produce of the salt-works are also in the hands of the same Dissidents, as well as that great post of the crown to which are entrusted all the secrets of the state, and which, according to the desire of our palatines and the instructions which they have given us upon this subject, should have been given only to a noble Pole of the Catholic religion. Having then demanded the observation of all these points by the marshal of the diet without any effect, I have, by the

“ Liberum

“ Liberum Veto, stopped the activity of all the deliberations,
“ and do hereby desire our ministers and our chancellor not to
“ put the seal of the kingdom to any acts which are contrary to
“ our laws. Moreover, as the great marshal of the kingdom
“ has neglected to reduce the number of the Saxon guards to
“ what is prescribed by the laws, as the treasurers of the two
“ nations have taken no steps to prevent the administration of
“ the public revenues and of the productions of the salt-works
“ from falling into the hands of the Dissidents and of strangers,
“ and, besides all this, we see that we cannot even hope for any
“ satisfaction, and that, in the place of endeavouring to cement
“ the confidence of the states, they irritate them still more, by
“ advancing strangers, to the prejudice of the senators and of the
“ nobles of merit and of an unquestionable fidelity, and who have
“ well served the republic; fearing moreover that the remedies
“ which may be proposed by this diet will be worse than the
“ disorder, seeing that every thing that has been proposed by the
“ Nonce has been either suppressed or rejected, although such
“ propositions ought to be the basis of every thing that passed
“ in the deliberations of the diet, and the only means to maintain
“ the necessary confidence between the states, to preserve us
“ in the enjoyment of what we have obtained by the blood of
“ our ancestors, and at the same time to give strength to the
“ dignity of the crown and to the liberty of the people. See-
“ ing then that these just and reasonable desires are not to be
“ heard, but on the contrary are despised, I place myself under
“ the security of the public to preserve the laws and the pre-
“ rogatives of all the orders of the state which have been broken
“ and violated; and I do hereby stop the progress of the delibera-
“ tions of the diet, and by this protest do declare it null to all
“ intents and purposes.”

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From perusing this protest one would be apt to imagine that its author ought to have been placed at the head of the Polish patriots; but it appears on the contrary, that he was of the Prussian party, who was placed there to blow up the flame of sedition, and that there was no foundation for the charges which he brought against the government, which were only made use of as a pretence to introduce the *Liberum Veto*, and to embroil the affairs of the state still more; and thus did the abuses multiply in the kingdom, the subjects suffered, the army diminished and fell into all kinds of disorders, the finances were badly administered, justice was exercised with great partiality, the poor were oppressed and tyrannized over, and all the frontier places were without any defence: however the sensible part of the nation thought themselves in some measure happy at this time, because they were at peace with all their neighbours.

The least difference between the Polish nobility is generally attended with some fatal effects, as the least spark often produces a great fire. In the year 1753 the count Zamoscki, governor of Lublin, pretending to have some right to the property of the house of Zamosck, attacked and took possession of the fortress of this name, and of the territories which depended upon it, with an armed force. The young starost of Zamosck, too weak of himself to regain the possession of this part of his patrimony, immediately desired the assistance of the prince of Radziwil, palatine of Wilna, who furnished him with 1500 men well armed: with these succours the young starost advanced towards the citadel of Zamosck, but the count of Zamoscki, seeing the storm that was ready to fall on his head, engaged the counts of Potocki and of Poniatowski in his interests; the former sent him a reinforcement of 250 foot and 300 horse, 100 Turks, and seventeen

seventeen pieces of cannon ; and he received from the latter 700 Cossacks from the Polish Ukraine. These two little armies were already in presence of each other, and about to commence hostilities, when the palatine of Cracow and the bishop of this town, together with the archbishop of Gnesna, became mediators in this affair to prevent an effusion of blood : their prudent exhortations produced a good effect, and the peremptory orders of the king, which enjoined them to lay down their arms immediately, or they should be declared enemies to their country, convinced them of the necessity of coming to an accommodation. The count Branicki, general of the crown, immediately sequestered the property in dispute, and, in the king's name, put a garrison in the fortress of Zamosck ; and the final decision of the affair was referred to the diet of the kingdom.

The following year a great dispute arose between the king of Poland and the Pope, on account of the latter's having given, in a late promotion of cardinals, an unjust preference to his Nuncio residing at the court of Turin to the prejudice of him who resided at the court of Warsaw ; an explanation was demanded, and when the court of Rome pretended to found this preference upon one crown's being hereditary, and the other only elective, the breach was made still wider.

Piqued at the unjust preference which the court of Rome shewed in this case for the Nuncio at Turin, the Poles gave the court of Rome to understand that they would not receive any more Nuncios into their kingdom, and that they believed themselves authorized to pretend that the primates should fill this place as legate of the holy see.

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This contest between the king of Poland and the Pope renewed some very interesting contests between the nobility and the clergy of the kingdom respecting the power with which the clergy were invested, and which the nobility pretended was usurped, contrary to the prerogatives which they had always enjoyed and to the fundamental laws of the kingdom. I have already observed, in my accounts of Denmark and of Sweden, what enormous abuses the Romish clergy made of the power which they unjustly extorted from many weak and irresolute princes while those kingdoms were elective; and it will be seen from the following remonstrance of the great marshal of Poland delivered to the king during this important contest, that they pursued nearly the same steps in this kingdom. “It is well known,” said the marshal, “that the ancient kings of Poland, as well as the whole nation, desirous of shewing some signal marks of their piety and zeal for the Roman Catholic religion, have incorporated the bishops into one of the three orders of the republic, which is the senate: this prerogative has given them great influence in all the public deliberations, and they have made use of it with so much success for the advancement of their interests, and have abused this pre-eminence to such a degree, that they would usurp another state in the bosom of the republic, and would thereby undermine all the fundamental laws of their country.” The marshal goes on further to observe, that the bishops had unjustly appropriated to themselves the judgment of all the contests which should be judged before the tribunals of the crown; and that the primate, instead of lending a hand to the support and execution of the laws, shews the road to others to break them, and even to shake their foundations: he then cited several examples of these infractions, particularly one which happened in the beginning of

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year, whereby the primate had been condemned by the tribunal of the kingdom, and conformably to the laws; but he complained that all the ecclesiastical jurisdictions of the kingdom were independent of the civil laws, to which they were not obliged to pay any regard, and that he had no superior judge but the Nuncio, to whose judgment they were obliged to conform themselves, especially the bishops, whom he said were dependent only upon the court of Rome and upon the canon law, and he pretended that they could not divest themselves of the least part of their ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction without the consent of the holy see. The marshal finished this remonstrance with making some reflections upon the immense property of the clergy, upon the small portion of it which they contributed towards the support of the government, and upon the exorbitant sums which passed every year to the court of Rome.

The infamous conduct of these sons of rapine, who, under the cloak of religion, were keeping their country in poverty and misery, and who had been the means of destroying all the ancient and equitable forms of government of this state, and nearly provoked the Poles to treat them as the Swedes, the Danes, and several other European nations had done 200 years before; but a new Nuncio appearing at Warsaw towards the end of this year, who was a man of great cunning and apparent moderation, dispersed those clouds, and by his superior address finally settled all the differences between the nobility and the clergy.

Towards the middle of the year 1756 his Polish majesty issued out his proclamation for holding a diet, in which piece this prince made some very bitter complaints of the fatal issue of the preceding assemblies of the nation, which deprived the

republic of the means of providing for her security, and of taking such efficacious measures as were necessary to recover her ancient lustre, which a neighbouring prince, who was seeking her ruin, was employing every clandestine measure to destroy: but in vain did Augustus invite the Polish nobility and clergy to reconcile themselves to each other, and to endeavour to apply some remedies to the disorders of the country. The Nonces assembled; but no sooner was the diet opened than the fire of sedition and discord broke out again with greater violence than ever; they even fired their pistols at each other and brandished their sabres in the air; several of the nobles were killed, and a great number of them were wounded, so that this diet finished in a more disagreeable and barbarous manner than any of the preceding ones.

Whilst these bloody scenes were acting in Poland, the king of Prussia seized upon the electorate of Saxony, and after having invested the Saxon troops in the camp at Pirna, he obliged them to surrender prisoners of war. Reduced to this cruel extremity, the king of Poland retired to Warsaw, where he soon made known his unhappy situation to the emperor of Germany and to the empress of Russia, and requested that these two powers, agreeably to the tenor of the treaties then existing, would employ the most expeditious and efficacious measures to succour him, and to deliver Saxony from the oppressive yoke under which she groaned, to which he received the most favourable answers; but while the army of the emperor attacked the king of Prussia, and while a formidable Russian army advanced by Lithuania, the secretary of the Prussian minister informed the great general of the crown, by order of the king his master, “that by virtue of
“ the treaty of Wehlau four battalions and some squadrons of
“ Prussian

“ Prussian troops had received orders to leave the environs of
 “ Stargand, and to advance towards the Polish territories; and
 “ that, as the republic had engaged herself by the same treaty
 “ to defend the states of the house of Brandenburg, and to
 “ furnish it with 4000 men, as auxiliary troops, in case of
 “ necessity, his Prussian majesty requested the general of the
 “ crown to keep this corps ready to march and to act:” and this
 secretary added, at the same time, “ that in case the Russian
 “ troops should direct their march towards the territories of his
 “ Prussian majesty, he hoped that the republic would not grant
 “ them a passage through their dominions, as they might, by
 “ that means, draw the war into the midst of Poland.” This
 declaration made so much the more impression upon the minds
 of the principal inhabitants of the republic as they were at that
 time divided into two parties, of which the one sided with the
 king and with the Russians, and the other declared openly for the
 interests of his Prussian majesty. The demand which the empress
 Elizabeth soon after made for the passage of the Russian troops
 through the Polish territories increased the troubles of the king-
 dom still more; especially as the Russians were desirous of making
 the important city of Dantzic a place of arms.

Towards the end of the following year the states of Courland
 assembled themselves, and represented to the king and to the
 republic of Poland, that as they were convinced that the empress
 of Russia would be much pleased to see prince Charles of Saxony
 elected duke of Courland, they should esteem themselves happy
 to give their voices to this prince, if his majesty would first
 declare the duchy vacant, and afterwards invest him with the
 sovereign power. In consequence of this representation the
 senate of Poland concluded, that the last duke of Courland had

neither accomplished the conditions for which the duchy had been conferred upon him by the regulations of the year 1736, nor received the homage of the states of the country, but had always been absent and in the service of a neighbouring power, who had lately declared in the most express terms, that, for particular reasons of state, she would never suffer the said duke, nor any of his male issue, to leave her empire; a declaration which undoubtedly declared the throne vacant, and that for these considerations, and at the desire of the nobility of Courland, who have requested his majesty to have pity upon this province, which has for eighteen years past been deprived of a legal sovereign, and to grant this sovereignty to prince Charles of Saxony, the senate, with a view of preventing any other evils which a longer vacancy might occasion, were of the opinion that his majesty would declare the duchies of Courland and of Semigall vacant, and they counselled his majesty so to do, and immediately after to invest his royal highness prince Charles with the sovereignty of those duchies, agreeably to the regulations of the year 1736, and under the conditions prescribed to the last duke: conformably therefore to this resolution, the king signed the deploma of the investiture, which was likewise immediately sealed with the seal of the crown, as well as with that of the great duchy of Lithuania.

It was in the midst of these exterior troubles that the king convoked a diet, which it was hoped would have been more successful than the preceding; but notwithstanding all the exhortations of the king, and the deplorable state of the kingdom, the disorder and confusion which were created by the Prussian party were the cause of its almost immediate dissolution: it was not for the interest of his Prussian majesty that the affairs
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of this kingdom should be regulated. From the moment that they began to deliberate upon the affairs of the government in the chamber of the Nonces, all the Prussian party cried out immediately, that nothing could be done while there were any Russian troops in Poland. In vain did they endeavour to quiet these people by proposing to carry their complaints to the foot of the throne; the Nonce of Volhinia protested against this measure, and declared that he would never permit them to enter upon any kind of deliberation while there were any Russian troops upon the territories of the republic: this Nonce continued obstinately in his opinion, put a stop to all the operations of the diet by the *Liberum Veto*, and then retired precipitately from Warsaw; whereupon the marshal dissolved the assembly, and they afterwards convoked a *Senatus Consilium* to advise upon such measures as were necessary to be taken in this fatal conjuncture.

In the year 1760 the king of Prussia sent a body of troops into Poland, which was preceded by a manifesto, wherein he sets forth, that he thought himself sufficiently authorized to take the same advantages that the Russians had taken to commit hostilities against him, and to make every effort to oblige them to desist from their enterprizes. This body of troops directed their march towards Posenania, and destroyed several Russian magazines which were formed in those parts: this detachment likewise carried off the prince Sulhowski from his house at Roussen and conducted him to Glogau, declaring that they should not have proceeded to this extremity, if this prince had not during the course of the war shewn an extraordinary partiality for the king's enemies. These proceedings appeared to the republic to be of too dangerous a nature to be suffered to continue, and therefore the senate made some bitter complaints to the court of Berlin, demanded the im-
mediate

mediate enlargement of the prince Sulkowski, reparation for the damages which Mons. de Dohna had occasioned by his irruption into Great Poland, and that a stop should be put to the inundation of bad money which the Prussians were pouring into the kingdom; and, in fact, that legal satisfaction which was due to a free kingdom which had always kept within the bounds of the most exact neutrality: but the king of Prussia was too much occupied at this time to give an answer to this ancient mode of making representations of this kind: the satisfaction which the Poles afterwards obtained for these wrongs will appear in the following sheets. The diet, which was convoked this year, was no sooner assembled than a scene of confusion and disorder, which had been the cause of dissolving many of the preceding diets, brought this in the same manner to a speedy issue.

During the course of the following year the necessity of stopping the circulation of the bad money, which had made its way almost through the whole kingdom, obliged the republic to call an extraordinary diet; but it was no sooner assembled than it was dissolved: all the Prussian party opposed this measure; they were interested in promoting this circulation; and the body of Russian troops in the kingdom and upon the frontiers was a sufficient motive for their protesting against all the deliberations of the diet.

In the year 1762 the nobility of Great Poland, who were chiefly in the Prussian interest, formed a confederacy against the Russian troops; whereupon the empress Elizabeth detached 12,000 men from her army under the command of the general Wolkonski to take up their quarters in this province, and to extinguish this fire of sedition before it arose to any height; but
before

before this measure was carried into execution, death put an end to the reign of this empress; Peter the Third, her successor, immediately made peace with the king of Prussia, as I have already observed, notified it to all the belligerent powers, and sent orders to his generals to evacuate their conquests and to return with their troops into the Russian dominions. All the states interested in this war were about to take their measures in consequence, when they were informed that Peter the Third, who was scarcely seated upon the throne, was precipitated from it again, to give place to the empress Catherine the Second.

This extraordinary revolution made Charles duke of Courland lose all hopes of supporting himself in the possession of his new territories. The duke Biron, who had been recalled from his exile by the late emperor Peter the Third, and who was supported by the empress Catherine, informed the nobility and the states of Courland by a manifesto, that he could not discover that he had been guilty of any offence against the feudal rights of the king and of the republic of Poland, and therefore, very far from thinking of giving up the least of his rights in quality of sovereign of the duchies of Courland and Semigall, was determined, on the contrary, to support them with all his power; and that he would not fail in due time to advise the senate and the states of Poland, that in case they endeavoured to confer any new obligations upon his royal highness prince Charles, as they had heretofore done, to the prejudice of his rights of sovereignty, they should be regarded as null; and he protested in form against every thing which tended to the prejudice of his sovereign house. Such a declaration, in the present situation of Courland, occasioned the greatest confusion and disorder: the regency and the nobility divide.

divided themselves into three parties : the first, who had been constantly attached to the interests of prince Charles, supported them openly, as being founded upon the validity of his election, and upon the investiture which he had received of the duchy of Courland : the second party, composed of the partizans of the duke Biron, followed the direction of the court of Russia : and the third, formed of those who were indifferent about the matter, waited for the event to join the strongest party.

If the Tartars had been disposed this year to follow the martial ardour of their Kan, Poland would have been totally ruined : on account of some pretended grievances this Tartar prince had assembled an army of 80,000 men, with whom he intended to have ravaged Warsaw, and all the southern and eastern parts of the kingdom ; but when these troops arrived to the banks of the Dneister they refused to pass this river, except they were shewn a formal order, signed by the Ottoman Porte, which authorized them to make this irruption ; and as the Kan could not shew any such order, all his army abandoned him except about 14,000 men, who, after receiving some presents, likewise returned into their own country.

Notwithstanding the opposition of several of the nobility, the government gained their point to open a general diet at Warsaw ; and certainly, if the Nonces had consulted the interests of their country and her distressed situation, this assembly would have been very peaceable ; but the enemies of all order and of the public good had not yet discharged all their rage. The count Malachowski, director of the chamber of Nonces, in quality of marshal of the last diet, opened the session by representing that the republic, which for many years past had languished under a
kind

kind of lethargy, was now beginning to be re-animated by the laws and by the care and assiduity of his majesty; he added, that he had some reason to believe that this assembly would regulate the affairs of the state which could not be regulated in the preceding diets; that the spirit of discord and animosity had so plunged the kingdom into disorder, confusion, and misery, that if the Divine Providence had not particularly watched over her preservation, inevitable destruction must have been the consequence; and therefore, as the state was in this perilous situation, he hoped, from the patriotic zeal of all the Nonces, that they would take care that the laws, of which they are the guardians, should be duly executed, and that they would endeavour to give some stability to the government, which was tottering, and ready to fall: in which confidence he would invite them to proceed to the election of a marshal.

This first meeting was the most confused and disorderly of the whole: several Nonces demanded to speak; others pretended that before any business could be entered upon they should proceed to the election of a marshal; so that, without coming to any decision, the meeting was adjourned till the next day, when the count Poniatowski declared that he knew very well the force of the laws, yet nevertheless he could not suffer that any business should be entered upon while the count Bruhl was present: as soon as he had pronounced these words sabres were drawn by both parties: Malachowski threw himself into the midst of the combatants, and intreated them not to trouble the peace and security of the diet; his moderation and address was attended with success, and their sabres were immediately sheathed; whereupon the count Poniatowski stood up again, and declared that violence had been offered to the assembly, and that

the attempt should not be suffered to go unpunished. Several other Nonces insisted that this affair should be submitted to the judgment of the great marshal of the kingdom: others desired that the authors of this riot should be ordered to retire as disturbers of the public peace; but the director of the chamber having now retaken his place, observed with great vivacity, that this chamber, which ought to be regarded as sacred and as an asylum for the person of every Nonce, had been made a place of tumult and violence, and that diligent search should be made to discover the authors of this attempt against the laws of the state, which declare the person who draws his sword in this assembly as guilty of such a high crime as cannot be suffered to remain unpunished.

This dispute increased more and more, till at length it was proposed to inform themselves whether the count Bruhl, who seemed to be the object of their hatred, was not the cause of the tumult, which would undoubtedly cease as soon as they knew the source of it. Hereupon several Nonces declared that count Bruhl was legally elected Nonce of Warsaw; but the count Poniatowski replied, that he ought not to be admitted into that house; and notwithstanding all the care of the count Malachowski the confusion and disorder of the assembly continued to increase, and a protest which the Nonce Szumakowski made in retiring destroyed all the force of the diet, which the director was obliged immediately to dissolve. It was soon perceived that the admission of count Bruhl into the chamber of Nonces was the cause, or at least the pretence, for this contestation: this nobleman had rendered himself very obnoxious in Poland by his insolent and insufferable conduct, and, as it is said, by his having broken through several of the laws of the kingdom to monopolize

lize all the principal places under the crown for himself and for his friends.

The Senatus Confilium, which followed the rupture of this diet, ordered the great marshal of the crown to search after the author of these troubles, and to endeavour to prevent the like happening in future; how far this order was carried into execution will hereafter appear.

In the following year the empress of Russia seemed to be determined to support the duke of Biron in the duchy of Courland and that of Semigall, which from the year 1726 to this time had been in a continued scene of confusion and disorder. Prince Charles of Saxony, elected duke of Courland and of Semigall, as I have already observed, received the investiture of these duchies, and afterwards appeared at Mittau, where his subjects took an oath of fidelity to him; but soon after the revolutions of Russia made the old duke of Biron appear again upon the political theatre of the world after a long exile in Siberia, where he had always been regarded as civilly dead, and the court of Peteribourg took the opportunity to redress, in some measure, the wrongs which they had done this man, for no other reason but because he was so lucky as to please the empress Ann, and determined to employ all their forces to replace him upon the throne of Courland: the empress sent a body of troops to Mittau, by the assistance of which her commissary sequestered all the public revenues of the duchy. In vain did the king of Poland attempt to settle this matter by negociations, in vain did he order the nobility of Courland not deviate from the oath of fidelity which they had sworn to prince Charles; Catherine was determined not to give up the point.

In this extremity the king of Poland, by the advice of the senators of the kingdom, sent two Polish noblemen into Courland; but the Russian minister declared, in the name of his sovereign, that he would not permit them to exercise any jurisdiction in that province; that her imperial majesty would never acknowledge any other duke but duke Biron, who had been legally invested with the government by the consent of the republic, and for whose liberty the king and the republic had so often interested themselves: it is true, they had often done so; but the late empress Elizabeth had as often positively refused to set him at liberty, and had moreover declared that neither duke Biron nor any of his issue male should ever go out of her dominions; and in consequence thereof the king and the republic of Poland, supposing him civilly dead, had declared the throne of Courland vacant. Her imperial majesty, added this minister, is not ignorant that these duchies are a fief which depends upon the whole body of the republic, and not upon the throne of the kings of Poland; and therefore she will never suffer that any infraction shall be made upon the rights and immunities of the republic by any person or power whatever. The senator Lipski was extremely astonished at this declaration; to which he answered, that Courland is a fief which depends upon the king, who is the sovereign lord thereof according to the constitution of the kingdom, and that it only appertained to his majesty, as king of Poland, to take cognizance of the affairs which regarded this fief. — “The king and the senate,” added he, “have not
“the legislative power, but they have the power of executing
“every thing which has been regulated by the diet, and there-
“fore the laws of the diet of 1736 have given the king the
“power of conferring the investiture of this fief upon whom-
“soever his majesty shall judge worthy of it. Since this time
“all

“ all the diets of Poland have been unhappily dissolved without
“ coming to any legal resolutions, and the king and the senate
“ have followed the spirit and the sense of that of the year
“ 1736 with regard to the affairs of Biron as well as with regard
“ to his highness the reigning duke.” This senator finished
his discourse with observing to the Russian commissary, that he
could not, without breaking through all laws and all the treaties
subsisting between Russia and Poland, hinder the king’s deputies
from executing their commission, authorized by the laws of the
kingdom and by ancient usage; that, in fact, the fief of Cour-
land is under the sovereignty of the king; that his majesty’s
titles with regard to this fief are incontestable; that even the
republic, for more than 200 years past, had never disputed the
rights which they had granted their kings upon this fief, and in
case that they changed their nature, it must be the republic that
must take cognizance of it, as will be clearly seen from the
conventions of 1569 and of 1727.

During the time that this scene was acting at Mittau, the
king of Prussia ordered his minister at Warsaw to declare, that
in consequence of the engagements which he had entered into
with the empress of Russia, and as he had heretofore acknow-
ledged the duke of Biron for duke of Courland, he never would
acknowledge any other person for sovereign of this province;
and moreover that as, according to the laws of the state, no
Catholic prince can possess this duchy, he would never permit
it to be occupied by any other than by a Protestant. In the
midst of these embarrassments the king of Poland held a Senatus
Consilium at Warsaw, to whom he laid open the peace which he
had made, and the necessity that he was under of retiring into
his hereditary states; he likewise recommended it to the senators

to deliberate maturely upon the means which were to be taken to guarantee his royal highness prince Charles in the free possession of Courland, and to obtain redress for the damages which the Russian and Prussian troops had occasioned to the inhabitants of Poland.

After several debates upon these subjects, all the senators were of opinion that an extraordinary diet should be immediately called. The result of the deliberations of the Senatus Consilium was nearly as follows: “ Forasmuch as his royal highness prince
“ Charles, duke of Courland and of Semigall, to whom the
“ king, in consequence of the regulations of the diet in the
“ year 1736, and not as an effect of paternal tenderness, has
“ conferred this fief of the republic, together with its solemn
“ investiture in the year 1759, finds himself, after four years
“ quiet possession thereof, troubled and inquieted by Ernest John
“ count of Biron, who has not the least legal pretensions to it,
“ but who is supported by foreign troops; his majesty, by the
“ advice of the senate, being desirous of maintaining the rights
“ of the crown, those of the republic, and as well the possession
“ of his royal highness, hereby orders the tribunals of Poland and
“ of Lithuania to cite immediately the said Ernest John count
“ of Biron before them, as proprietor of a considerable landed
“ property in the duchies of Courland and of Semigall, for
“ having dared, with the assistance of foreign troops, to invade
“ those duchies, to threaten the nobles who were not of his
“ party, and to make them break their oaths of fidelity; for
“ having been guilty of many other bold actions to the prejudice
“ of his majesty, of the republic, and of his royal highness as
“ legal duke. His majesty moreover orders the said tribunals to
“ receive the accusations which are herewith sent against such

“ of the inhabitants of these two duchies as have joined the
“ party of the before-mentioned Biron, to the end that they
“ may be treated and punished according to the laws as his ac-
“ complices, and perjured persons: and to preserve the rights
“ which belong to his majesty, to the republic, and to his royal
“ highness the duke, the senate, actually assembled, protest
“ solemnly against all the attempts which have been made, and
“ which may hereafter be made, against their rights; and more-
“ over, although his majesty cannot reflect without anxiety
“ upon the unhappy issue of so many diets, he is resolved to
“ convoke in a proper time and place an extraordinary diet to
“ use his utmost endeavours to regulate the internal affairs of
“ the kingdom.” In the same piece the king likewise approved
of the conduct of his plenipotentiaries in Courland; to whom
he sent orders to continue at Mittau, to the end that they might
be able to give their advice to prince Charles, to watch over the
preservation of the rights of his royal highness, as well as over
those of the crown and of the republic.

All these dispositions were very proper undoubtedly, but prince
Charles could not be supported in his capital without a con-
siderable body of troops: he was obliged to retire at the approach
of the Russians, who immediately put a garrison of 300 men in
the castle of Mittau. About the same time likewise the minister
of the king and of the republic of Poland at the court of Russia
was obliged to retire from Peterbourg, and it was at length per-
ceived that there was no possibility of adjusting in a friendly
manner the differences which were continually arising between
the two courts, and which were clandestinely fomented by
the king of Prussia, who, for some time past, had formed the
project of seizing upon a great part of the Polish territories, and
who

who only wanted a favourable opportunity to carry his plan into execution. Although the court of Vienna had again by the late treaty of peace formally ceded Silesia to him, he clearly perceived, that as the Austrian forces were now equal to his, his successors would never be suffered to remain in quiet possession of this province, and that the house of Austria would take every favourable opportunity to regain it; and therefore towards the end of this year he indirectly made the first proposition to the emperor and to the empress-queen of Hungary and Bohemia to give up Silesia, for which he had sacrificed such rivers of blood, on condition that he might be permitted to take possession of all Polish Prussia and of the cities of Dantzic and Thorn, and that the emperor should guarantee the right of possession to him and to his successors: but this proposition was then rejected, as all the towns and the greatest part of the open country in Silesia were almost destroyed by the late war, and their inhabitants and principal manufacturers reduced to poverty by the load of taxes which they were forced to pay after they fell under the Prussian dominion.

While the whole kingdom of Poland was in the greatest tumult and confusion on account of the elections of Nonces for the extraordinary diet, the senate was informed of the death of Frederic Augustus the Third, king of Poland and elector of Saxony, who died at Dresden the fifth of October; and soon after of the death of count Bruhl, his prime minister and favourite, whose arrogance and insatiable avarice made him hated in Poland, and despised by all those who were well acquainted with his character.

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As soon as the king's death was made public at Warsaw, the archbishop of Gnesna, in quality of primate, agreeably to the fundamental laws of the kingdom, took the reins of government into his hands during the interregnum, when the operations of all the courts of justice in the kingdom were suspended till a new king was crowned; and the following day he gave notice, by sound of trumpet, that whoever should attempt to disturb the public peace during this interregnum should be punished with death in twenty-four hours.

The primate, after having given orders for holding a diet, which was to precede that of the election of a new king, gave audience to the ministers of Russia and Prussia, who informed him that their respective sovereigns would be highly pleased to see the choice of the republic fall upon a Polish nobleman rather than upon a stranger, and that they would use every possible means to prevent the first and most precious of their liberties, the free election of their kings, from being infringed in any respect whatever.

Nevertheless the new elector of Saxony had still the throne in view, which had been possessed for so many years by his ancestors, and opened himself confidently to his brothers Xavier and Charles upon the measures which he intended to take in order to mount the throne; and the day after he had made his brothers his confidants he received a note from the duke Charles, in which this friendly brother assured him, that he was ready to give up all his rights and pretensions to the duchy of Courland, if this renunciation would engage the empress of Russia to act in favour of his electoral highness to obtain him the sceptre of Poland. The elector took the first opportunity to make known his intentions to the re-

public by a circular letter which he wrote to all the senators. — The primate having assembled the senate, informed them of the death of Augustus the Third, and the senators immediately determined that the republic should send ambassadors to all the foreign powers with whom they were in friendship to inform them of this melancholy event; they likewise gave proper orders to prevent the public revenues in Poland as well as in the great duchy of Lithuania, accruing from the custom-houses, the salt-works, and the public taxes, from being diminished during this interregnum. Many reasons concurred likewise to engage this assembly to postpone the holding the diet on account of several important matters upon which the palatines ought absolutely to deliberate before they proceeded to the elections of Nonces, on account of the misintelligence which had manifested itself among the nobility for some years before, and which on this important occasion ought to be adjusted, and on account of the re-establishment of that confidence and union among all the orders of the state, so necessary to the public good: all these considerations the prince primate was desired to have in view when he published his circular letters to fix the time for holding the diet of convocation; in consideration of which they likewise afterwards determined that this prince should receive a gratification of about 10,000*l.* sterling, which was to be paid him out of the public revenues of Poland and of Lithuania.

Early in the following year (1764) the elections for the Nonces, to form the diet, began in the different parts of the kingdom, than which nothing could be more tumultuous and disorderly.

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The conduct of the empress of Russia was on this occasion beyond all description partial; indeed she had resolved to leave no method unemployed to serve her friend Poniatowski; however thus much must be said in her favour, that she is seldom wanting in gratitude, which will often cover a multitude of faults: but the behaviour of her ally the king of Prussia, who, notwithstanding all her great talents, made her and the Russian nation the instrument to promote his ambitious designs, was like that of a phlegmatic tyrant, whose whole study and attention was deliberately devoted to the contriving new arts and measures to oppress mankind: he had now resolved to seize upon Polish Prussia, and therefore when he saw that the empress was inclined to favour Poniatowski, he immediately joined her party in appearance, and at the same time proposed the exclusion of all foreign princes, particularly of the elector of Saxony; as a foreign prince upon the throne of Poland might give such succours to that kingdom as to enable her to oppose his designs.

The senators and the nobles of Great Poland in one of their meetings debated the two following questions:—1st. “Whether it was proper to elect a king from among the Polish nobility, to the exclusion of all foreign princes, and agreeably to the intentions of the empress of Russia and of the king of Prussia?”—2d. “Whether every nobleman ought to give his voice at the election of a king, or whether they should chuse deputies among the nobility to represent them?”

All the members of the assembly, except four, were of the opinion that they should leave the decision of the first proposition to the diet of election; and with regard to the second proposition, they agreed that every nobleman should give his voice at the

election. It was upon this occasion that the judicious and prudent palatine of Kalish observed, that by excluding foreign princes from offering themselves as candidates for the throne, they would not only leave themselves without any foreign support, and give themselves up entirely to their ambitious neighbours, who had evidently some bad designs upon them, but that they would justly merit the ill-will of many of the principal houses in Europe, which had given them princes who had governed Poland with resolution, wisdom, and magnanimity, and it was these princes who had civilized the Polish nation, and to whom the principal part of the great families of Poland owed their fortune; he added likewise respecting the second question, that to deprive the second class of nobility of their right of election would be to rob them of one of the most precious liberties which they enjoyed, and that if the election of a king was entrusted to a certain number of deputies, they would be more easily corrupted than the whole body of the nobility assembled. While the empress of Russia and the king of Prussia were taking every measure to corrupt the Nonces, and to favour the election of Poniatowski, the former sent an act to the prince primate, written with her own hand and sealed with her own seal, whereby she engaged for herself and for her successors never to form, under pretence of her bearing the title of empress of all the Russias which the republic had granted her, any claim upon the province of that name, which is now a part of the kingdom of Poland.

The king of Prussia likewise sent an act of the same nature, but expressed in still stronger terms, containing a parallel renunciation of all pretensions of what nature soever upon that part of Prussia which was under the dominion of the crown of Poland: how far this king, whose flatterers have given him the

title of Great, has kept his word, all Europe are at present in a state of judging.

On the other hand, the emperor, the king of France, and the sultan of the Turks declared to the prince primate how much they interested themselves in the happiness and tranquillity of the republic, and gave him new assurances of their friendship and of the desire which they had to promote the interest and prosperity of the Polish nation, which was undoubtedly sincere on the part of the sultan, as his future conduct has evidently convinced the world: each of these three powers likewise expressed their desire that the Polish nation should be free in their choice of the candidates who aspired to the throne, and offered to protect and support whoever should be elected by the unanimous and free choice of the nation, and conformably to the fundamental laws and constitutions of the country.

The letter which the grand vizier wrote to the prince primate on this occasion deserves to be recorded, as it is the foundation of the quarrel which afterwards happened between the Russian and the Ottoman empires, and gives us a clear idea of the honesty and consistency of the councils of the Porte, notwithstanding what several Russian scribblers have said to the contrary:—"The kingdom of Poland," said this vizier, "has always been acknowledged in all the courts of Europe as a free and independent republic, which has the right of electing a chief without the intervention of any foreign power whatever. Founded upon this principle, his majesty, the most powerful and most illustrious emperor of the Ottomans, &c. as an effect of his natural magnanimity and of his high sentiments, desires that the election of a king of Poland should be made conformably to the ancient
" constitutions

“ constitutions and laws of the country, with the exercise of
 “ this precious liberty which belongs to the republic, and without
 “ the intervention of the Sublime Porte or of any other foreign
 “ power in any manner whatever. Such are the intentions of
 “ his highness, which I now declare and make manifest to you
 “ and to our ancient friends the principal members of the re-
 “ public: and as we would that the ambassador of France, the
 “ envoy of Prussia, and the resident of Russia, who are now re-
 “ siding at the Sublime Porte, should be informed thereof, we
 “ have made known to them his highness’s intentions, not
 “ doubting but they will immediately communicate to their re-
 “ spective courts the esteem which his highness has for the
 “ republic, and the interest which he takes in maintaining the
 “ liberties of the nation. The supreme chief of the Ottoman
 “ empire moreover desires that the great marshal of the crown
 “ should be informed of the contents of this letter, and that he
 “ would make it public to all the nobility of Poland, to the end
 “ that they may not be influenced in this election by any power
 “ whatever; and in these points consist the true desires and sen-
 “ timents of his highness, &c. &c.”

From the dispositions of the neighbouring powers at this time
 it was imagined that the diet of election would be conducted
 with order and decency; but soon after the court of Warsaw
 was extremely alarmed at receiving the news of the unhappy
 success of the election for Nonces in the town of Graudeutz,
 one of the most important places in all Polish Prussia, by the
 right which this town had to send an unlimited number of
 deputies to the diet of convocation. The Russians pretended to
 have a magazine in this place, and sent a body of troops hither,
 as they said, to guard this magazine, but which was certainly a

breach of the Polish laws: a quarrel ensued, which ended in a scene of bloodshed. Indeed it might be reasonably asked, what motives could the Russians have for forming a magazine upon the Polish territories at this time, when all the North was in a state of peace? When the Polish lords come to Warsaw to open the diet of convocation they are generally attended by a certain number of troops, which they maintain in their service respectively; and this mixture of troops, cloathed in perhaps two or three hundred different uniforms, gives us a clear idea of the sad defects of this government, where every lord erects an independent government in his own estate, refuses to support the republic, and would rather see his country destroyed by fire and sword, than join with his neighbours to repel the common enemy. The day fixed for the opening of the diet the Nonces came and would have taken their places in the large hall which was appointed for this purpose; but a great part of the benches was found occupied by the troops of those who were in the interest of Poniatowski, and all the galleries which were above the benches were filled with Russian troops. All the honest Poles immediately foresaw how this affair was to be conducted: this arrangement gave great offence to the principal part of the Nonces, and a considerable tumult was occasioned by it, which did not cease before the proposition was made to proceed immediately to the election of a marshal: several Nonces opposed this measure, and observed that it had always been usual to order, in the first place, this important charge to be exercised by the marshal of the last diet: all the assembly consented to this advice, and they forthwith sent for the old count Malakowski, who, after making them wait a considerable time, arrived at last and took possession of the marshal's staff; but instead of rising up to give notice to the Nonces who were to enter upon the debates, he declared that

that he could not act before all the foreign troops were ordered to depart out of the hall, and before the diet was entirely free. Scarce had this marshal pronounced these words before all the Russian party drew their swords and their sabres; whereupon the prince Adam Czartorinski and several other nobles of his party threw themselves into the midst of the assembly and parried the blows which were aimed at the marshal, who, unconcerned in the midst of this danger, presented his stomach open to those who threatened him, and declared, "If you must have a victim, strike me; but at least I will die free, as I have always lived so." Afterwards this old man declared, that since they had now neither laws nor liberty existing, he would retire, which he soon after did, and carried off the marshal's staff with him. In vain did they oppose his retreat, in vain did they desire him to forget what was past; he left the assembly, and thus the diet was strictly and legally dissolved before it had entered upon any business. The principal part of the Nonces left the hall with the count Malakowski; but those who remained, being all in the Russian interest, although they were but few in number in comparison to the number of those who were retired, proceeded to the election of a marshal, and their choice fell upon prince Adam Czartorinski, who was openly supported by the empress of Russia and by her troops in defiance of all the fundamental laws and regulations of Poland: this princess had at least adopted her late husband's plan, in many respects, touching the affairs of this unhappy kingdom. Thus was the nation divided into two parties; that of the general of the crown, count Branicki, which was followed by the army of the crown, together with prince Radzivil, palatine of Wilna, and of several other nobles with their troops, retired three leagues from Warsaw. As soon as the new marshal, to whom
the

the diet had at the same time entrusted the army of the crown, had taken the oaths usual on this occasion, he used his utmost endeavours to bring over the count Branicki to his party, and when he found that he could not succeed, he expedited his orders to the army of the crown, whereby all the officers of the different corps were ordered to abandon their general, and to come and serve under him: at the same time those Nonces and senators who composed the assembly, which they called a diet, approved of the association of Wilna, formed and supported by the empress of Russia against prince Radzivil and his adherents, and joined this confederacy in making new solicitations to the empress of Russia to obtain more succours to restore the tranquillity of the state, by the election of a king who was agreeable to her. Thus did this politic princess by her intrigues and by violence, in defiance of all laws and justice, force a part of the Polish nation to intercede with her to send a fresh supply of troops into this kingdom to crush all opposition to her measures.

This assembly likewise gave full power to their marshal to call any number of foreign troops into the kingdom that he should judge proper, seeing that the republic could not furnish him with such troops as were necessary, nor supply him with the means to make new levies. Afterwards they proceeded to fix the qualities which the future king ought to have; and it was decided that he ought to be a Roman Catholic, young, born of Polish parents, and bred up in the kingdom; and they moreover declared all those to be enemies to their country, and their goods to be confiscated for the use of the republic, who should endeavour to make interest in the kingdom to procure the crown for any foreign prince. The affairs of the duchies of Courland and

of Semigall were likewise taken into consideration, and these Nonces formally acknowledged the duke of Biron to be sovereign of these provinces, agreeably to the dictates of the empress of Russia, whose will was the only law now subsisting in Poland. Nevertheless the troubles and disorders increased in all parts of the kingdom, and the ministers of the emperor, of France, and of Spain retired from Warsaw; and the confederates, who were clandestinely supported and encouraged by the empress of Russia and by the king of Prussia, and, joined by a considerable body of Russian troops, frequently entered into little combats with the army of the crown commanded by count Branicki, and with the troops of prince Radzivil. It was in the midst of this civil war that they proceeded to the diet of election, when the greatest part of the nobility of the kingdom were driven from their habitations by the Russians and by the Confederates who were in their interest, and when all those who attempted to make any opposition to the empress's measures were threatened to be carried off and sent into Siberia: the choice of a marshal, for this diet was unanimous, fell upon Mr. Sonowski, a Lithuanian, because none of those who would oppose their illegal measures were suffered to appear at this assembly.

The count Poniatowski was likewise unanimously elected king for the same reason, and in obedience to her imperial majesty's commands. Some days after the new king swore solemnly to observe the Pacta Conventa, and received the diploma of his election from the hands of the marshal of the diet.

Soon after this the new king convoked a new diet for his coronation, which he opened with a very pathetic speech from the throne, in which was great unanimity and harmony, because

no person dared oppose the measures of the empress of Russia. Towards the end of this year the ceremony of the investiture of the duchies of Courland and of Semigall was performed by his Polish majesty in favour of the eldest son of the duke of Biron, agreeably to the desire of the empress of Russia and of the king of Prussia; but this investiture was the cause of much confusion and disorder among the nobility of Courland, who not only protested against the measure, but actually accused Biron of many crimes before the tribunal of Warsaw. If Stanislas Augustus Poniatowski had come legally to the crown, and with the general consent of the kingdom, as being a man of good address and of talents, he would undoubtedly have restored peace and good order in the kingdom; but the greatest part of the proud Polish nobility could never forget the wounds which were given to the fundamental laws of the kingdom by the election of this prince; and no sooner was the coronation performed than a storm appeared in the horizon which threatened total ruin to the republic. It is true, the king took every prudent measure to reconcile the different parties and to re-establish good order, not only in the tribunals of the crown, but in every branch of the public administration. Being informed that the commissaries appointed by the treasury were preparing a tarif for the custom-houses in the different parts of the kingdom, which the diet of convocation had agreed to establish, he wrote them a long and obliging letter to engage them to proportion the duties, which were to be paid according to the rank and abilities of each individual: "We should likewise advise you," adds his majesty in this letter, "that if our treasury, to the commissioners of
 " which, by virtue of several ancient laws, to whom the regu-
 " lation of this tarif belongs as much as to the republic, should
 " suffer a diminution in its revenues by the modification of these
 " duties,

“ duties, this diminution cannot be agreeable to us in every
“ respect, but we have not the least doubt but that the states,
“ considering the expences which we have saved in our table,
“ notwithstanding there are so many laws which forbid any
“ saving to be made in this article, will find some means
“ to supply this loss in the public treasure without any person’s
“ suffering by it.”

The commissaries, in answer, promised to find a balance proper to reconcile the public interests with the due execution of the laws, and engaged themselves, by the good order which they intended to establish even in the collection of the customs, to diminish the duties in favour of the lower class of people, agreeably to his majesty’s desire. Before the holding of the last diet for the coronation, the weights and measures had been arbitrarily regulated in the different parts of the kingdom; but the king caused a regulation to be made in this diet, that in future they should be determined and reduced to the same standard in every part of the kingdom, and that all those who refused to conform to this regulation should be condemned to pay a fine of 1000 marks; that the magistrates should lose their employments, and that the common people should be imprisoned for three months. The same diet likewise, conformably to the king’s desire, made another regulation to prevent the merchants and Jews from receiving exorbitant gains from the sale of their merchandizes.

For some time before the meeting of this diet there had been frequently great contests between the different orders of the clergy respecting tithes and citations before incompetent tribunals: this honest brotherhood, who by illegal measures had thrown the greatest part of the riches of the state into their own hands, now
began

began to quarrel amongst themselves: to conform to the regulations of the last diet the different orders of the clergy, both regular and secular, assembled themselves, and proposed the deliberation of the eight following articles.—“ 1st. To regulate the appeals to the proper tribunals. 2d. To abolish the practice of sending to Rome the first fruits, or the revenues of the first year of the enjoyment of the bishoprics. 3d. To examine the titles whereby the abbey held their great property and the rents of their foundation. 4th. To engage the clergy to give a free gift for the support of the dignity of the crown and of the government. 5th. To exclude ecclesiastics from holding farms and from the administration of the royal and hereditary property. 6th. To pay the produce of the tithes in money. 7th. To forbid all ecclesiastics, and especially the regulars, from interfering in temporal affairs. 8th. To fix the competency of the jurisdictions before which contentious affairs arising between the clergy and others ought to be debated and judged.”

Though all these articles were of the greatest importance, they disputed for a long time on the subject of them, and at last retired without coming to any decision. My readers will from hence judge of the insufferable oppression and avarice of the Romish clergy in this kingdom at present, and of the infamous behaviour of the court of Rome in countenancing and protecting such a set of harpies, who under the cloak of religion are sucking the blood of their fellow creatures.

Towards the end of the year 1766 the prince Czartorinski, who had been at Rome to notify the event of the new king's coming to the throne, brought a brief of this court with him from thence, which gave great pleasure to all the clergy: by
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this brief the pope permitted all the ecclesiastics of the kingdom to exchange their property against other property which was nearer to their places of residence. The pope likewise confirmed the decree of the states, which prevented those who had committed willful murder from taking sanctuary in the churches or convents, and ordered all the superiors of convents and the principals of the churches to deliver up immediately to justice all those miscreants who should take refuge in those holy places: this was undoubtedly an act laudable in itself and conformable to strict justice, and it were much to be wished that the same regulation was made in Italy and in all the other Roman Catholic countries.

During the time that the government was taking every measure to adjust the differences which were continually arising between the clergy and the different tribunals of the kingdom, as this order was now become so turbulent and powerful, that they would not submit to any civil jurisdiction though they were continually guilty of the greatest excesses, the Greeks and the other Dissidents began to think of drawing themselves out of that oppressed state into which they were plunged by their being deprived of having any share in the administration of public affairs. Excited by the bishop of Mohilew, the only prelate of the Greek church in Poland, and in the name of all the Protestant nobility, two gentlemen presented a petition to the king, wherein they demanded to be re-instated in their ancient rights and privileges, and to be placed upon the same footing in every respect with the Roman Catholic subjects of the kingdom. “The
 “ difference of sentiments upon some points of religion among
 “ Christians,” said they in their petition, “ ought not to enter
 “ into any consideration with regard to the employments of the
 “ state.

“ state. The different sects of Christians, although they differ
“ in opinion among themselves with respect to some points of
“ doctrine, agree all in one point, that of being faithful to their
“ sovereign and obedient to his orders: all the Christian courts
“ are convinced of this truth, and therefore, having always this
“ principle in view, and without having any regard to the
“ religion they profess, Christian princes ought only to seek
“ after those whose merit and talents make them capable of
“ serving their country properly.” The king gave no answer at
this time to the petition of the Dissidents, but the matter was
referred to the diet which was held the following year, when the
ministers of the courts of Russia, of London, of Berlin, and of
Copenhagen supported their pretensions. The prince Repnin,
as minister from the empress of Russia, presented the following
memorial to the court of Warsaw upon this head, which was
supported by the ministers of the before-mentioned courts.

“ The community of religion, and the glory of having con-
tributed to the happiness of the human species, are not the only
reasons which induced her imperial majesty to continue her in-
tercession in the most pressing manner in favour of the Greek
and Dissident subjects of this kingdom, to the end that she may
if possible remove the oppressive load under which they are groan-
ing, and re-establish them in their ancient rights and privileges
as citizens and members of a free state. The fundamental laws
of the nation, consented to by the whole community, established
a public right which could not be annulled by any posterior law
made only by a part of the community. By the treaty of 1686,
and by that of Oliva, the Russians, as well as almost all the
neighbouring powers, engaged themselves to watch over the
security of every part of the state, to procure them exact justice,
and

and to guarantee their respective and common rights: the support of the republic and of its tranquillity is therefore no longer the object of the attention of her citizens only, but is likewise become an obligation to all the neighbouring powers, who, by contracting with the republic, have equally contracted with all its members; and by adding to these reasons the still stronger motives which arise from the situation of the Russian empire with regard to the republic, it will be clearly seen that the empress cannot limit the protection which she has granted to the Greeks and to the Dissidents without acting contrary to her glory, to the dignity of her crown, and without betraying the confidence of her friends; and therefore the empress demands that it may be regulated in the present diet;—1st. That the churches which appertained by right to the Dissidents, and which have been illegally taken from them be restored to them; that they may have the liberty to rebuild or to repair those which have been damaged by time or by any accident, &c. &c.” The rest of this memorial has been already described, together with the consequences which it immediately produced in the diet; in fact, the affair became so serious that it had very nearly occasioned the dissolution of the diet; but the king, to prevent things from being carried to this extremity, declared to this assembly that he was ready to shed his blood for the Romish religion, but that he believed it would be prudent to wait a little, and deliberate before they entered upon any violent measures. The king’s advice was adhered to, and the diet terminated happily; but the day before it was dissolved, the bishops and the principal clergy agreed to the following articles in favour of the Greeks and Dissidents.

“ 1st. Agreeably

“ 1st. Agreeably to the toleration prescribed by the laws of the kingdom, the Dissidents shall be supported in the exercise and practice of their ceremonies in those places where they had formerly legal churches, and shall not be troubled in the exercise of their form of worship. 2d. They shall have liberty to rebuild and repair such churches as they have not abandoned or given up to the public by embracing the Roman Catholic religion, or which have not been taken away from them by judicial decrees; they shall possess them, with the consent of the proprietors of the land upon which they respectively stand, agreeably to the laws of 1632, 1660, and 1717, but they shall not be permitted to enlarge their ancient churches. 3d. In those places where they have their temples, the lord of the territory shall grant them a convenient place, with an inclosure, to bury their dead; but their burials shall be performed without any solemnities and ceremonies, if these are not legally authorized. 4th. They shall be permitted to build, with the consent of the lords of the respective territories, upon their own lands and near to their churches, proper houses for the residence of their respective ministers and clergy agreeably to what the law has granted them; they may likewise, in those places where they have no churches, celebrate divine service in their houses, with modesty and without any pompous ceremonies, agreeably to the regulations of the year 1717. 5th. The law-suits of the Greek priests and of their families shall be judged according to the express laws of the kingdom; and the ministers of the Dissidents shall be judged by the tribunal which was assigned them by the regulation of the year 1632. 6th. Those cases which concern the landed property, as well of the Greek as of the Dissident churches, shall be decided by the tribunal prescribed by the laws of the kingdom. 7th. The Greek and Dissident ministers and clergy

contribute to all the taxes of the republic, agreeably to what has been ordered by the ancient laws and regulations of the state. 8th. Those who enjoy the right of presentation to the churches of the Diffidants shall not insist upon any payment from the priests for such presentation, nor dispossess any of those who are established in their churches without taking the advice of their superiors. 9th. It shall be lawful for the Greek priests, conformably to the practice that is tolerated in that religion, to administer freely and without any obstacle the sacrament of baptism, to give the nuptial benediction, and to bury the dead, on paying what is due to the curates for tolling the bell: and to prevent any kind of vexation respecting this matter, and to abolish all the abuses which the curates and parochial clergy have introduced as new-year's gifts and payment for the pretended confession at Easter, the college of bishops will order and regulate, by their pastoral letters, that under pretence of rights and prerogatives the said parochial clergy shall not demand more of the Diffidants than what has always been demanded of the Roman Catholics in the same places; without nevertheless abolishing thereby the ancient conventions which have been legally made, or those which may be made in future, by virtue of which a certain sum may be ordered to be paid in general. The college of bishops promises that these articles granted to the Greeks and to the Diffidants shall be punctually observed in all their extent, and that by their letters pastoral they will recommend and enjoin all the inferior clergy to conform thereto with the greatest exactitude.

When we consider that these articles were formed by a college of Romish bishops, we ought to admire their great condescension, and in all probability, if they had only the empress of Russia to

to contend with, matters might have been pacified and their country saved; but the king of Prussia, who was taking every clandestine measure to embroil their affairs, as he had now fully resolved to seize upon Polish Prussia at all events, persuaded the empress of Russia that those regulations which the bishops had made were not equal to those which her imperial majesty had proposed in her memorial; and in consequence of this, this princess ordered a great body of her troops to enter Poland, and another detachment to enter Lithuania. Such an act of violence, in the then critical situation of Poland, produced all the effects that the king of Prussia could wish it to produce; clamours, discontent, and tumults were heard in every part of the kingdom: the bishop of Wilna carried his complaints to the foot of the throne, and his Polish majesty could not avoid demanding the court of St. Petersburg to give orders to their troops to quit the territories of the republic as soon as possible.

The ambassador of Russia and the minister of the king of Prussia residing at Warsaw demanded, by a memorial in the name of their respective sovereigns, that the laws of the year 1764, whereby it was regulated that all the internal affairs of the kingdom which regarded the civil and military establishments should be decided in the diet by a majority of voices, should be repealed as far as they had any concern directly or indirectly with any matters of state, namely, with levying contributions and with increasing the number of their troops.

I have already frequently observed that all the resolutions of the Polish diets, which had the force of laws, were to be formed unanimously, and that one Nonce, by means of the *Liberum*

Veto, could defeat the good intentions of all the rest of the assembly. This privilege, which was formerly looked upon as the basis of the Polish liberty, has been of late years been employed by the partizans of the king of Prussia and others to defeat all the good intentions of those who were disposed to save their country from ruin, and to dissolve the diets without coming to any resolution. Those regulations of the year 1764 were calculated to prevent those abuses in future, and to put the Polish diet in this respect upon the same footing with the parliament of Great Britain; but this plan was by no means agreeable to the views of the king of Prussia, who had determined the destruction of this state, or at least to bring it under his dominion, and therefore under the cloak of religion, which he laughs at in secret, he pressed the empress of Russia to join him in the before-mentioned demand: to satisfy these two powers it was therefore regulated, by a law made to interpret those of the year 1764, that the establishing of new taxes, the augmentation of the army of the republic, treaties of peace, war, &c. and all other matters of state, should be decided in the diets *nem. con.*

The great scene, which had been preparing for a long time, opened in the beginning of the year 1767 by a new declaration of the empress of Russia, whereby this princess made known to the Poles, that her firm resolution was not to give up any of the points which she had proposed to the preceding diet relative to the Dissidents; and moreover demanded that the court of Warsaw would convoke an extraordinary diet to regulate this matter with all convenient speed. The king of Prussia, who had by his emissaries sown the seeds of sedition through all the Polish dominions, and persuaded the Dissidents every where to enter into a confederacy, supported the demands of the empress
of

of Russia; and moreover added on his part, that he regarded the re-establishment of the Dissidents in the least of their former privileges as an act which his ancestors had promised to guarantee by the treaty of Oliva, and which he was therefore obliged to comply with, as well as by the treaty of alliance which actually subsisted between Prussia and Russia. The kings of England, Denmark, and Sweden, as guarantees of the treaty of Oliva, made the same demand for the holding an extraordinary diet, the object of which was to satisfy the complaints of the confederacies of the Dissidents, which the king of Prussia had privately formed in the kingdom: the foreign princes before-mentioned were made to believe that all those complaints were real, and therefore they were as it were insensibly drawn in to give countenance to one of the most daring acts of oppression that ever any tyrant projected and carried on under the cloak of religion. Besides the confederacy of the Dissidents, or those Poles who professed the Greek and Protestant religions, and who demanded the free exercise of their respective religions without being subjected in any respect to the Roman Catholic clergy, though the latter were established by the fundamental laws of the kingdom and the enjoyment of all the rights granted to other citizens, there was another association formed and likewise privately supported by the king of Prussia, of all those who were discontented with the decisions of the last diet, and with the measures which the empress of Russia had taken, not only in forcing a king upon them, contrary to the fundamental laws of the republic, but by afterwards insisting upon such decisions being made in the diet as tended to destroy those laws entirely.

Assured

Affured of such a powerful protection, 260 gentlemen of Polish Prussia, with some Prussian agents at their head, assembled themselves at Thorn, and formed another confederacy, conformably to the wishes of his Prussian majesty, and demanded to be restored to their ancient rights and privileges, of which, as they pretended, they had been divested. The towns of Thorn, of Elbing, and of Dantzic were invited to join them, but the latter would not enter into this measure but under the express condition of not being submitted to a marshal who was not of their own naming, and of not being obliged to undertake any thing against what they owed to the king and to the republic of Poland. The duke and the states of Courland acceded likewise to this confederacy, but at the same time declared, that this accession should not at all affect the attachment which the duchy of Courland and that of Semigall owed to the republic of Poland, nor to the rights of the Roman Catholic religion; that the marshal of the confederacy should not exercise any jurisdiction over these duchies; that he should not be hereby authorized to impose any contributions upon them; and, in fact, that this step ought not to be regarded as an example for the other confederacies. To justify their association, the confederates published a manifesto, containing the principal motive which had determined them to take this extraordinary step; and as this important piece will throw some new lights upon the intrigues of many of the confederates, I will state it at large.

“Sensibly touched at seeing our country become such a scene of confusion and oppression, and daily falling more and more into decay by the violent changes which have been made in our fundamental laws, and by the diminution of the prerogatives which held the balance between the different orders of the state,

and oppressed by those who would destroy our most precious liberties, we have borne those wrongs in silence for some time past in hopes of an agreeable change, which we waited for with impatience after a cruel experience of what is passed; but seeing that, after one confederacy was dissolved, the last diet, to the prejudice of the fundamental laws of the state, has confirmed such establishments as are dangerous and tend to the ruin and destruction of the citizens, without paying any regard to the voices of the senators and Nonces who opposed them; in this perilous situation we were forced to take some violent measures to secure ourselves against the storm which was ready to break upon our head, and to endeavour to save ourselves by the same means that our ancestors made use of in a parallel case, namely, by uniting not only their persons, but also their thoughts and their hearts to save their country; and, following their example, have united and confederated ourselves, perceiving no other means to obviate the evils which threaten our country, and to relieve our oppressed friends. We were not led into this measure by any other motive but the public good, and by the laudable desire of preserving the laws of our country in their ancient purity, and to relieve from the weight of oppression under which they have long groaned those of our fellow-citizens who are unhappy for no other reason but because they took the rights and privileges of the nation too much to heart, and preferred the happiness of their fellow-citizens to their own welfare, honours, and riches. We protest that we are sensible of and know all the respect and submission which our duty imposes upon us for the majesty of the throne, and that we are too much persuaded of the patriotic sentiments of his majesty the king, our gracious master, for to doubt one moment that they do not tend to the same end, namely, that of re-establishing us in those rights which have
always

always formed the basis of the throne, the security of the country, and the happiness of every citizen: who can then be insensible of the trouble which several of our fellow-citizens have suffered, even in the midst of our country, of which we see a striking example in the person of prince Charles Radzivil, crushed down by all sorts of oppression, which indeed threaten every one of us with the same fate? and which of us, instead of extinguishing the first sparks, would rather wait to see a great fire which might reduce every thing to ashes? We should endeavour to oppose the pernicious ambition of our fellow-subjects in time, before we feel the dangerous consequences: we will endeavour therefore to shake off that oppressive load which is hanging over our country by our own forces, being sensible likewise of the friendship of our invincible neighbour; a friendship of which we know too well the price, not to blame those who, far from regarding it as they ought, have employed every means to make us unworthy of it as well as themselves, and have found a pretence, under the cloak of religion, to make no reply to the good intentions of her imperial majesty, which the prince her ambassador has declared to the senate, and thereby have been wanting in friendship towards a power which has always been attentive to our well doing, without examining the engagements of the treaties which connect us with the neighbouring powers. The ambitious views of our oppressors are founded upon this principle, that the future diets being free may be dissolved, and that they shall never be called to an account for their bad conduct. Enlightened by those authentic declarations which have been lately published, in the name of her imperial majesty, by prince Repnin her ambassador, which we take for our guide, our intention is to re-instate the laws in their former force, to relieve our oppressed fellow-citizens, and above all things to preserve the

the friendship of this great princess, which is as necessary to the republic as precious to all our fellow-citizens; resolved at length to put ourselves in a situation to disperse that confusion which is introduced into the government, and to relieve the oppressed, among whom we may count the Greeks and the Protestants in this kingdom of every state and condition, we desire, for the preservation of our laws and liberties and of our ancient form of government, an extraordinary diet, under the guarantee of her imperial majesty, which we demand and re-claim from this moment, as well as her protection and assistance; but before this diet be convoked, for the love of our country we invite all our fellow-citizens to join us, and to second the purity of our intention; and we do hope that there is not any son of Poland who is so unnatural as to refuse to oppose himself at this moment to those evils which are prepared for us, and who doth not wish to see the peace and happiness of the republic restored; and moreover who would thereby expose himself to become the enemy of his country and of this neighbouring power, who every day gives us evident proofs of the care which she takes of our rights and privileges and of the preservation of every citizen: we protest, at the same time, that in all this enterprize we have not forgotten our first duty, which is to preserve, without any alteration, the holy Catholic religion which is established in the kingdom, the preservation of which is guaranteed by the before-mentioned declaration of her imperial majesty, and for which we will live and die."

It will be difficult from the first reading of this piece to discover what party those deluded confederates, who undoubtedly meant well, would join, and what were the secret motives which induced them to take this step. The prince Radzivil, who

opposed the illegal measures which the empress of Russia had taken to force a king upon the Poles, was condemned by the confederacy of Wilna, which was supported by this empress, to be shut up in the town of Sluck, and to have his goods confiscated and placed in the hands of five trustees: these confederates in their manifesto lament the unhappy fate of Radzivil, whom they represent as suffering for his country's good; and at the same time they extol the conduct of the empress of Russia, and would endeavour to make their fellow-citizens believe that she was their only friend, and the source from whence they were to hope for protection and assistance. The fact is, these confederates were deceived; they were secretly promised powerful assistance by the king of Prussia, but were desired at the same time to let every thing pass in the name of the empress of Russia, whom he meant to flatter; although, as soon as their association was discovered, the king, the bishops, and the violent Roman Catholics, who are the persons complained of in the manifesto, were as secretly assured that his Prussian majesty would take no active part in their affairs, and that all which he did was in compliment to the empress of Russia, and moreover that they would act the part of patriots in supporting firmly the form of government then established; whence we may discover the source of that torrent of confusion and disorder which afterwards tore this unhappy kingdom to pieces. The Romish clergy, those pests of every well-regulated society, who had also received a promise of support from the court of Vienna, were determined rather to see their country totally destroyed than to render justice to their fellow-citizens. The king of Prussia had already entered into a negociation with the empress-queen of Hungary and Bohemia upon the division of Poland; and the king of Poland, like a vain fop, who
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has no will of his own, was ready to come into any measure for the sake of having a new suit and a splendid table.

The great duchy of Lithuania soon after followed the example of Great Poland and of Polish Prussia: the sentence which was pronounced during the interregnum against prince Radzivil was reversed, and this prince on his arrival at Wilna was unanimously elected marshal-general of the confederacy. As the great and extraordinary authority which had been granted to the commissioners of the treasury and those of war had greatly irritated the people, and forced the principal part of the inhabitants of Great Poland into this association, the first act of authority of the new marshal was to depute the palatine of Podlachia to the members of these two commissions, to inform them that they were required to take an oath of fidelity to the king and to the republic in the following terms:—1st. That they will be faithful to the king and to the confederates. 2d. That they will support and protect the Roman Catholic religion, as well as the liberties and privileges of the other communities. 3d. That they will not carry on any correspondence by private or suspected letters. 4th. That they will not divest themselves of their employments.—Several commissioners took the oath in this form, and others retired. Seeing a dreadful storm gathering in the horizon, to prevent its ill effects, the king at length consented to convoke an extraordinary diet, which was opened in the beginning of October 1767 by the king himself, who now declared that he would join the general confederacy, and that the direction of this diet appertained to prince Radzivil in quality of marshal; whereupon this prince opened the session by a proposition to elect deputies, who, being provided with unlimited powers from the states, should treat with prince

Repnin, ambassador from the court of Russia, of every thing which might concern the re-establishment of the laws, liberties, rights, and prerogatives which regarded the Dissidents, as well as of all the other citizens by virtue of treaties, and that the whole should be afterwards confirmed by the states, even though some of the counsellors or Nonces should not happen to be present; that this confirmation should be effectual in every respect, though only nine counsellors and eighteen Nonces should have agreed to it, and that Russia and the other neighbouring powers should have guaranteed them.

This extraordinary proposition, which attacked the fundamental laws of the kingdom more essentially than any measure that the opposite party had yet undertaken, threw the whole assembly into the greatest confusion and disorder; the bishops of Cracovia and Kiovia attacked it with great vehemence: "These pretensions of
 " the Dissidents," said they, "tend to destroy the rights of the
 " Roman Catholic religion, and we will never consent to the
 " establishment of this commission in the manner it has been
 " proposed." The boldness with which these bishops explained themselves left prince Repnin without any hopes of his being able to gain them, and therefore he resolved to go the shortest way to work, and arrested these prelates, together with the palatine of Cracovia and his son the starost of Dolinski, and sent them into Russia under a strong guard: afterwards he published a declaration to justify this extraordinary measure, in which he observed that the troops of his sovereign, as friends and allies of the republic confederated, had arrested those members of the diet for having been wanting in respect to the dignity of her imperial majesty, by attacking the purity of her salutary intentions, which were so disinterested and friendly for the republic:
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he moreover added, that Russia pretended not only to guarantee the support of the fundamental laws of the kingdom, but also the legal form of the interior government of the state, which they were about to establish; that in consequence thereof it would be necessary that the plenipotentiaries of the republic should have a power so extensive as that with which the ambassador was furnished; that no senator or Nonce should be permitted to leave Warsaw before all these projects had been signed by the unanimous consent of the states who were assembled; and that, for the ratification of the treaty, the Nonces should return to Warsaw in the month of February following. Such a violent attack had never been made upon the government of Poland from its first institution to this time, and notwithstanding the senators and Nonces were undoubtedly frightened into the measure, all this did not pass without many violent debates; and when the marshal demanded whether they all gave their consent that these projects should be signed, some of the voices answered in the affirmative, but the greatest part of the assembly were silent, which was interpreted as a tacit consent; whereupon the king and the two marshals of the general confederation of Poland and of Lithuania signed the acts, and the plenipotentiaries were immediately chosen from among the senators and Nonces, who assembled at the house of prince Repnin with the ministers of Prussia, England, Sweden, and Denmark, and deliberated upon the six following articles, which were presented to them by the ambassador of Russia.—1st. The Dissidents, namely, the Greeks and the Protestants, shall have the free exercise of their religion. 2d. There shall be a perfect equality among them. 3d. They shall have a tribunal, of which the one half of the members shall be Greeks and the other Protestants. 4th. They shall not be subject to any jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic clergy. 5th.

5th. Their clergy shall be upon the same footing with the Roman Catholic clergy. 6th. They shall be permitted, as well as the Catholics, to acquire and to hold fiefs, and to possess secular dignities.

New contests arose immediately on account of these articles; and, to arrive at the end that was proposed, it was agreed that they should name a committee of eight persons, who should treat in particular with prince Repnin. This secret council having determined all the operations, the deputies, as well of the republic as of the Dissidents, assembled themselves at the house of prince Repnin, where, in the presence of the four ministers before-mentioned, the following articles were finally agreed upon to settle the differences of the two parties.—1st. That the Greeks and Dissidents shall have a church at Warsaw, and temples and schools in all the districts of the provinces of the kingdom and of the great duchy of Lithuania; but they shall not build any churches in the towns without having first obtained the king's privilege for this purpose, and that the nobility shall be permitted to grant them this privilege in their respective estates. 2d. That the Greeks and Dissidents shall be permitted to use bells, to place organs in their churches, to baptize their children publickly, to marry, and to bury their dead, and all these agreeably to the ceremonies of their respective religions, and without the least obstacle. 3d. That the Greeks and Protestants, who are noble, shall be admitted into the senate, into the diet, and into all the charges, honours, and prerogatives of the republic upon the same footing and in common with the other nobles who are Roman Catholics, as well in Poland as in the duchy of Lithuania. 4th. That they shall no longer be called Schismatics and Dissidents, and that their ministers shall

shall be called pastors and curates, and not preachers. 5th. That all the property which was confiscated from them before the year 1717 shall be restored to the proprietors; but that with regard to the property which had been taken from them since that year, they should be at liberty to re-claim it judicially. 6th. That a mixed commission shall be established to judge their law-suits and disputes, and that they shall be permitted to convoke synods, without having any regard to the permission of the Catholic bishops, and without depending in any respect upon their consistory or jurisdiction.

They moreover agreed that the ancient law, *Rex Catholicus esto*, should be invariable; that in consequence thereof the Roman Catholic religion should always be the established religion, and that no queen of Poland should be crowned, except she was a Roman Catholic; that the succession to the crown should continue for ever to be elective; that the king should never be permitted to alienate the property of the crown or of the republic; that a toleration in matters of religion should be maintained in every point; that no attempt should be made against any of the privileges of the cities and towns; that an affair of state, which has been once rejected, should never more be brought on the tapis; that a stranger, who has been ten years established in the kingdom, shall be acknowledged as a natural inhabitant; that the nobility alone should possess all the offices of the crown, and that the confederations should be signed during the time that they elected the Nonces for the diet, and not at any other time,

All these points, agreed upon by the secret committee, were laid before the diet assembled at Warsaw in the beginning of the year

year 1768.; and as many of the Nonces insisted upon their being debated, they were refused the liberty of speaking, which occasioned a great tumult and a general discontent; however, notwithstanding this refusal, the Nonce of Volhynia attempted to speak, on which the prince of Lubomirski asked him if he was greater than the king, that he would absolutely speak upon this occasion? to which the Pole answered, "Every one is persuaded that the king is greater than I, but I represent the republic, which is more ancient than the king." Nevertheless this famous diet, which has since been regarded as the cause of, or rather was made the pretence for, all the evils which have fallen upon this unhappy kingdom, was terminated with great tranquillity and with good order. The diet ratified all the regulations that had been agreed upon by the commissioners and by their committees; they agreed that the peace which had been concluded between Russia and Poland should be renewed in all its points; that all the respective territories possessed by the two powers in Europe should be guaranteed; and that the rights and privileges of the Greeks and Dissidents should be forever sacred and inviolable, as well as all the new regulations made by this diet, and guaranteed by Russia and by the other powers before-mentioned.

They afterwards determined what affairs of state should be unanimously concluded in the succeeding free diets, which were, —1st. The establishment, the suppression, the increasing, or diminishing of the public taxes. 2d. The augmentation of the troops of the crown. 3d. Treaties and conventions made with foreign powers. 4th. Peace and war. 5th. The naturalization of foreigners and the titles of nobility; and those who wish to obtain the latter shall be obliged to prove that he is descended

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from a family who have been distinguished for at least three generations past. 6th. The state of the coinage. 7th. Every thing that concerns the employments to which the nobility aspire. 8th. Every thing that concerns the other employments of the republic. 9th. Every thing that regards the arrangement of the diets and their deliberations. 10th. The discussion of the question, Whether the republic should increase or change the authority of the senate, seeing at present it subsists by the regulations of the year 1717? 11th. Whether a king of Poland should be permitted to acquire any landed property in the kingdom by purchase? 12th. In what cases it will be necessary to convoke a *Pospolite Ruszenia*, or general assembly of the nobility? 13th. The regulations that are necessary for the taking possession of property. 14th. And any change or alteration that is to be made in the before-mentioned particulars. — These were the last deliberations of this famous diet to restore peace and tranquillity in Poland, so long wished-for by every good citizen: many of the Nonces were of the opinion that they had finished this great undertaking, and even the empress of Russia imagined that by the means of her troops, which were dispersed in the different provinces of Poland to keep the discontented party in awe, she should have all the glory of re-establishing the Dissidents in their rights and privileges and of giving peace to the kingdom: but alas! this princess, as well as the greatest part of the Polish nation, was imposed upon; they had not yet discovered the intentions of the king of Prussia, who at this time had advanced in his negotiations with the court of Vienna for the division of this kingdom. With the empress of Russia, and with the other powers before-mentioned, he was apparently a supporter of the Dissidents; he had sent secret advice to the Romish bishops and to their friends, that even by the

laws of Poland they were obliged to support the rights and privileges of their order, which were now evidently attacked, and that they would meet with no opposition from him; and now the court of Vienna, assured of his Prussian majesty's intentions, gave the Polish bishops and their party to understand that the conduct of the empress of Russia was by no means agreeable to them, and that they were determined to support the Roman Catholic religion at all events: this assurance gave great spirits to the bishops and to their party, and immediately, in consequence of it, a new confederation was formed at Bar in Podolio, of which the starost of Krasinski, the brother of the bishop of Kaminiac, was elected marshal. Countenanced and secretly supported by the court of Vienna and by his Prussian majesty, this confederacy became formidable in a very short time, and were likewise promised powerful support by the Khan of the Tartars. Scarcely was the news of the association of Bar received at Warsaw, when they were informed that a great number of other confederacies were formed in different parts of the kingdom. The nobility of the palatinate of Cracovia seized this instant likewise to form another junto: one of them, after hearing mass, gave the signal at one of their meetings, and immediately all the nobles drew their sabres, and began to cry out, Confederacy! Confederacy! upon which one of the members of the regency asked them, whether they meant to rebel against the king? to which they answered, No; if the king will join us, we will join him; and we do hope that all the nobles here present will immediately be of our party and sign the association, which was accordingly done. The nobility of Samogitia, as well as those of Siradia, of Masuria, and of Sandomir, took immediately the same steps; and almost at the same time the court received certain advices of the revolt
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of the inhabitants of the Ukraine, and of new confederacies being formed in Lithuania and in the other provinces.

From this time the whole kingdom became a scene of confusion, of massacres, robberies, disorders, and devastations. In vain did the Russians endeavour to check these horrible disorders in their source; in vain did they run from one part of the kingdom to the other to disperse or to crush these confederates; their little victories only served to exasperate the Poles the more against them, whom they regarded as the cause of all the evils which had befallen their unhappy country, and to increase the love of liberty and independence in the ulcerated souls of these republicans. Irritated at this conduct of the Polish nobility and clergy, the empress of Russia was making formidable preparations to crush these confederations, when she was informed that the Turks had declared war against her, and had arrested her minister at Constantinople: she was now obliged to withdraw the greatest part of her troops from Poland, which was in the most distressed situation, and exhibited all the horrors of a civil war; and they were soon after replaced by those of the king of Prussia and of the empress-queen of Hungary and Bohemia. A body of Prussian troops took possession of Polish Prussia and of all the south-western parts of the kingdom, while the Austrians took possession of Cracow and of all the south-eastern parts of Great Poland. The two German powers were far advanced in the treaty for the division of Poland before it was even proposed to the empress of Russia, who, by the bye, was [to support a long and expensive war against the Turks, Tartars, and the confederates of Poland, while the empress-queen and the king of Prussia were to reap quietly all the advantages thereof. Undoubtedly the conduct of the empress of Russia was by no

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means justifiable in the first place, because the Poles gave her no cause to send a body of troops into their kingdom to trample under foot their liberties and privileges, and to destroy their fundamental laws and constitution; but it is generally believed that she had no other motives for taking this step than those of serving her friend Poniatowski, and a desire of correcting some of the abuses which the Poles had made of their liberties: the obstinacy and bad conduct of the Polish clergy and of their friends forced her afterwards to take those violent steps which made her so hateful to the greatest part of the inhabitants of this nation. But if we examine the conduct of the two German powers by the rules of justice, it must appear very black indeed; and as there is a Supreme Being, who for some time suffers, but at length punishes, such acts of base ingratitude and oppression, undoubtedly their supposed wisdom and policy will one day be regarded as foolishness, and the chains which they had prepared for others will be fixed about their own necks; this has been the case of tyrants and oppressors from the beginning of the world, and certainly will so continue till its dissolution. In whatever light we may regard the Turks with respect to religion, the conduct of the Sultan and of the Ottoman Porte towards the Poles in such a distressed situation was strictly just, honourable, and the very reverse of that of their Christian, Catholic, and Apostolic neighbours.

The confusion, devastation, and civil war continued in Poland during the years 1769, 1770, and 1771, whereby the whole face of the country was almost destroyed, many of the principal Polish families retired into foreign states with their effects, and had it not been for a body of Russian troops which acted as guards to the king at Warsaw, that city had likewise exhibited
a scene

a scene of plunder and massacre. The confederates of Bar, considering that all the troubles, massacres, and pillagings, which had now almost desolated the whole country, were occasioned by the present king's being illegally advanced to the throne, and by the ambition and tyrannical proceedings of the empress of Russia, as they had not yet discovered the intentions of the king of Prussia and of the empress-queen of Hungary, protested against the election of Poniatowski, declared the throne vacant, and interceded with the Turks to assist them against their powerful oppressors; the consequences of which are so well known to all my readers, that it would be needless for me to recite them. The conduct of these confederates, considering the ideas of liberty and independence which they had imbibed from their childhood, and considering the supposed insults which they had received, was at first not so blameable; but their attempt afterwards to carry off and to murder the king whom they had sworn to obey, was such an atrocious act as tarnished all their praise-worthy deeds, and will for ever make them be regarded with horror, especially as he had from his advancement to the throne to this time constantly employed the little power with which he was invested in acting as a mediator, and in endeavouring to reconcile the jarring interests of the different parties. From the time that the Prussian and Austrian troops took possession of Poland, Prussian discipline prevailed throughout all Polish Prussia and the adjacent provinces, which were laid under heavy contributions, and Austrian discipline prevailed in all the southern and eastern parts of the kingdom. The imperial soldiery receive very little pay during the summer months, and are very often obliged to shift for themselves even when they are in their own country, and therefore it is natural to conclude that they were not very scrupulous about plundering those Poles with whom
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the confederates had left any little subsistence: it is true, the king of Prussia raised very heavy contributions upon the clergy and upon those who had wherewith to pay them, but he constantly kept up a strict discipline among the soldiery; on the contrary, wherever the Austrians came nothing was heard of but scenes of robbery and plunder. When a state keeps up an army of 300,000 men, and has not a revenue to support 100,000 men properly, what can its subjects and neighbours think of receiving otherwise? As the Roman Catholic bishops and their friends had repeatedly received the strongest assurances of friendship and support from her Catholic and Apostolic majesty the queen of Hungary and Bohemia, they in the first place received her troops as friends, and those of his Prussian majesty were received upon the same footing and for the same reasons; but nothing could equal their surprize when it was discovered that these powers, together with the empress of Russia, were entered into an alliance to divide and dismember their kingdom: they saw that it would be to no purpose to make any resistance, and that the torrent of oppression which was ready to be poured down upon their heads was only to be supported with patience: they now, when it was too late, saw their errors, and the evils which their obstinacy and ill conduct had brought upon their country and upon themselves, and despair took place of their turbulent and revengeful disposition. The three allied powers, acting in concert, set up their formal pretensions to the respective districts which they had allotted for and guaranteed to each other: Polish Prussia, and some districts bordering upon Brandenburg, for the king of Prussia; almost all the south-eastern parts of the kingdom bordering upon Hungary, together with the rich salt-works of the crown, for the empress-queen of Hungary and Bohemia; and a large district of country about Mohilow, upon the banks

of the Dnieper, for the empress of Russia. But although each of those powers pretended to have a legal title to the territories which were allotted them respectively, and published manifestoes in justification of the measures which they had taken, yet, as they were conscious that mankind were too well informed to be imposed upon by such fallacies in this enlightened age, they forced the Poles to call a new diet, and threatened them, that if they did not consent unanimously to sign a treaty for the ceding of those provinces to them respectively, the whole kingdom should be laid under a military execution, and treated as a conquered state. Such an act of tyranny filled the minds of all the impartial and sensible people of Europe with horror; it was undoubtedly contrary to all civil laws and justice: the Kan of the Tartars would have been massacred by his own people for having proposed such an act to a country where they went as friends to defend. However, in this extremity of distress, several of the Polish nobility protested against the measure, and retired into foreign states, chusing rather to live in exile, and to have all their landed property confiscated, than be the instruments of bringing their country to utter ruin; but the king, whose ambition had been the first great cause of bringing all those evils upon his country, was the first also who signed this act; and his laudable example was followed by the clergy and by their friends. Future ages will regard this measure with the greatest indignation, those who projected it with horror, and those who acquiesced in it with contempt.

CHAP. II.

*Of the Form of GOVERNMENT at present established in
POLAND.*

SINCE this division has taken place there is not, strictly speaking, any regular form of government in Poland: those three great powers, acting in concert, direct every thing as they think proper; and the king, the senate, and the diet are at present only the executors of their laws. However, as there is now some appearance, from the great age and infirmities of the king of Prussia, and from his successor's being the very contrast to him in character, from the amiable disposition of the emperor of Germany, and from his not being altogether so violent as his mother, that these oppressed people will be able at least to re-assume some part of their former government, I will proceed to set forth the present form of government which should be established in Poland, according to the fundamental laws existing in this kingdom. If ever Poland regains her ancient power, and those great powers are divided or otherwise attacked, she will be legally authorized to retake those provinces which she has now been forced to cede to these oppressors, and even to demand satisfaction for all the revenues which they have drawn from them; the act which they passed in the diet for this purpose can never be regarded by those great confederates as a legal title; if it is null in itself, not only as being protested against by the greatest part of the kingdom, and consequently contrary to their fundamental laws, but from their being forced to sign it
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the presence of three great armies, which were destroying the face of the country and threatening them with military execution, though there was no declaration of war, neither was there any justifiable reason assigned for such a measure; hence therefore, as they lost those provinces by the superior force of their adversaries, whenever that cause is removed they will be legally justified in regaining and re-assuming their former authority over them.

The government of Poland is in many respects like the ancient Celtic or Gothic forms of government, which have been corrected or altered in almost every other state of Europe, this being the only state that has preserved the name of a republic with the royal dignity. This government, which was originally one of the most free and regular governments in the world, is now become one of the most tyrannical and oppressive: it has always been observed, that where the Roman Catholic clergy bear sway in a state, and the politics of the court of Rome have prevailed, tyranny, slavery, and oppression were the consequences. I have already stated the measures which these troublers of every well-regulated government took to oppress and tyrannize over the inhabitants of this kingdom; so that from being a free people, nine tenths of all the Polish nation are in a state of the grossest ignorance and of the most abject slavery, and though they are called Christians are treated with more cruelty than many of the Negro slaves in the West-India islands. Every gentleman has a right to give his voice at the election of a king, and even to be elected himself; but this is one of the sources of all their evils and of the vitiated state of their present government; the throne, since the extinction of the family of the Jagellons, has been always put up to the best bidder, and as

there have been few of the Poles rich enough to buy it, it has often been sold to strangers: the nobility and clergy generally defend their liberties against the king and keep the rest of the nation in slavery. The farmers do not cultivate and sow the lands for themselves, but for their lords, to whom they and their families appertain, and by whom they are bought and sold like so many sheep and cattle, and are denied even the common rights of humanity; the conscientious clergy, who are so extremely zealous on account of their religion, make no scruple to keep their fellow-creatures in this miserable state, and are constantly taking every advantage to make them more so: the number of these farmers constitute the riches of the nobility; every farmer is obliged to work four days in the week for his lord, and one day for himself and for his family; his labour produces to his proprietor about four guineas and a half yearly. The lord may sell his farmer to whom he pleases; if he kills him the law condemns him to pay a fine, which is about one pound sterling: but as a gentleman is not dependent upon any other person, he cannot be judged in any criminal affairs but by an assembly of the states, neither can he be arrested till after he has been judged and condemned, so that the guilty person is generally left unpunished. If the farmer killed by a nobleman appertained to another lord, the former is obliged to replace him by another slave. Great numbers of the nobility are very poor, and rather endeavour to enrich themselves by commerce; they put themselves into the service of others who are rich and powerful, condescend to do the most menial offices in the houses of their equals, and give themselves the titles of electors of kings and of destroyers of tyrants. To see the king of Poland in all his pomp of royal majesty, one would imagine him to be
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the most absolute prince in Europe, though he is, strictly speaking, the least so.

I have already observed, that the Poles really make with their king that contract which is only tacitly made in other nations between the king and his subjects: when the king of Poland swears to observe the *Pacta Conventa*, he absolves his subjects from their oath of obedience if he violates any of the laws of the republic. The king nominates to almost all the public offices, and with the consent of the states confers all the honours: nothing is hereditary in Poland but the lands and titles of the nobility: the son of a palatine and that of a king have no right to the dignities of their respective fathers; but there is a great difference between the king and the republic; the king cannot displace any person whom he has once nominated to any public office, but the republic has a right to dethrone the king if he transgresses the laws of the state.

The nobility in Poland are free in all the extent of the word, as they depend only on themselves: they are divided into two orders, the order of senators and the equestrian order; these constitute the republic; and though there is a king elected in Poland, the government is strictly speaking aristocratical. These two orders, who before the division of Poland were at least 300,000, divide the sovereign power with the king, who is likewise chosen by them; with this distinction however, that the nobles make the laws, and the prince is obliged to submit himself to them.

The nobles, who are jealous of their liberties, often sell their voices, but rarely their affections; for no sooner have they elected

a king than they begin to fear his ambition and to cabal against him : the great officers whom he has made, and which he cannot displace, far from continuing to be his friends, very often become his enemies : those who are attached to the court are hated by all the rest of the nobility, so that there are always two parties formed in the nation, a division which is inevitable and even necessary in a country where there is a king, and where the subjects would at the same time preserve their liberty.

The legislative authority, and in fact every thing which regards regulation of the state, is vested in the general assemblies of the nation, which are called diets : these assemblies are composed of the senators and of a great number of gentlemen of the second order ; the senators are the palatines and the bishops ; the second order is composed of the Nonces or deputies of the nobility of each palatinate : at these great assemblies the archbishop of Gnesna presides as primate of the kingdom, and as being the first person in the state after the king.

These diets by the laws of the kingdom are to be held alternately in Poland and in Lithuania ; and, as I have before observed, the most important affairs are often decided in them by the deputies with their sabres drawn. Every gentleman who is deputed to these general assemblies has all the privileges of a Roman tribune to oppose the laws of the senate ; for if he only says, I protest against the proceedings, he stops the unanimous resolutions of all the rest, and if he leaves the place where the diet is held, the whole assembly must separate : this is a noble privilege without doubt, but, as hath been already often observed, it has been horribly abused, seeing that the welfare, prosperity, and tranquillity of the republic have frequently been thereby sacrificed

sacrificed to the hatred, personal interest, and ignorance of an individual: whether this privilege, which was very impolitically granted to every individual who has a seat in the diets, was the act of a king or of the senate, it must be observed, that at the same time that it furnishes a means to stop the enterprizes of those who would attempt any thing against the laws of the state, it has opened a door to all kinds of disorders and dissensions, which have been one of the causes of all the evils that these people have suffered: but to stop the disorders which are the consequence of this regulation, they have applied a remedy which is still worse.

Poland, as I have already observed, is seldom without two factions, and consequently, as unanimity in their diets is almost impossible, each party forms a confederacy, in which they decide by a plurality of voices without paying any regard to the protests of the minority. These assemblies, which are contrary to the laws of the country, are in some measure authorized by custom and holden in the name of the king, although generally against his consent and against his interests. When the troubles are finished, the general diets then confirm or dissolve the acts of these confederations: one diet may even change every thing which has been done in the preceding, as one king, in an absolute monarchy, may abolish all the laws of his predecessor.

As soon as the deputies or Nonces are assembled, they proceed immediately to elect a marshal, whose principal function is to preside and to prevent any quarrel or dispute which may arise, and to regulate the debates: this marshal, who is always one of the

Nonces,

Nonces, is chosen alternately from among those of Great Poland, of Little Poland, and of Lithuania.

The senate is composed of the bishops, of the palatines, of the castellans, who are their deputies, and of the great officers of the crown: the bishops hold the first rank in this assembly, not as the pious and humble chiefs of the Christian church, but as proud and insolent Romish prelates, who would put all things under their feet: the archbishop of Gnesna is the first senator, and during the interregnum sends circular letters for convoking the provincial assemblies for the election of the Nonces: he likewise fixes the time for holding the diet of election; and after having collected the voices of the electors, proclaims the new king.

The other diets, which are either ordinary or extraordinary, are convoked by the king; the ordinary diets are regulated by law to assemble once every two years, and the extraordinary ones are to be held in the interval of this space, whenever any unforeseen accident shall make it necessary: the duration of the diets is now fixed to three weeks, and that of the ordinary diets to six weeks; but all the orders assembled may unanimously consent to a prolongation.

Generally speaking, all these diets are very tumultuous; during their session the republic is like a troubled sea, where the waves are driven against and break upon each other, but as soon as the session is finished the storm ceases, and the republic regains at least an appearance of tranquillity. It should be observed, that in Poland a king is never unanimously elected; and from this division,

division, which the Polish politicians regard as the support of their liberties and the sure barrier against despotism, are formed two parties, who are always interested to watch over each other, and which often degenerate into confederacies, of which there are four different sorts in Poland. The first are called general confederacies, and formed by the consent of the senate and of the nobility for the good of the public: excess of zeal, or rebellion, is the motive for the second sort, and then the kingdom is generally in a state of anarchy and confusion: the third sort are those of the army, when it rises against the state or mutinies against its principal officers; these are more dangerous than either of the foregoing, and against which the laws are the most severe: the last sort, and those which are the most terrible of the whole, are those which the Poles call Rokosz, wherein all the nobles are obliged to take up arms; these confederacies are generally either against the king or against the senate. Each confederacy names a marshal, and this supreme chief has an authority without bounds; he receives ambassadors, commands the tribunals, and disposes of the property and revenues of both ecclesiastics and seculars, and even those of the king himself, if he thinks proper: the army which he levies is entirely under his orders, and he has the right of life and death. All that the Poles could do to diminish the immense power which they granted to this dictator, has only been to oblige him to act in concert with his lieutenants, who were ordered to watch constantly over his conduct.

The system of civil laws at present established in Poland is very imperfect, and in many respects unjust and oppressive: the common people may as well apply to the Kan of the Tartars to do them justice, when he enters into their country at the head of

of a powerful army, as to their courts of law, if their adversaries are noblemen or gentlemen, or if they have money to corrupt the judges or the lawyers; and with respect to the clergy, they pretend to be their own judges in all controversies or disputes of what nature soever, and as well to be the arbitrators and judges in appeal of almost all the civil cases in the republic. The starosts have the jurisdiction over particular districts, and the provincial courts over the whole province: when any of the common people are accused of a crime the sentence of the former is final; but when one of the nobility is so accused, he must be tried before a general assembly of the nation. The common courts of law are so vitiated and corrupt, that when any matter of consequence comes into dispute between two or more of the better sort of people, the affair is generally decided by an extraordinary commission of the state; if it is a dispute concerning landed property, and one of the parties is more powerful than the other, or has a greater number of vassals, he that is the most powerful generally gets possession of the property in dispute by an armed force, and employs the revenues of it to corrupt those who are to be the judges in the case. The police of this republic is much upon the same footing with their other civil regulations: if a comparison was made between the Poles and the Turks in this respect, I think the preference should be given to the latter, because we find many among the Turks who have been taught morality and common honesty from the laws of Mahomet, but the generality of the people of Poland have no idea of any such thing. The nobility in this republic live, with respect to each other, almost in the independency of the state of nature; they are under no controul, and they regard the common people as an inferior order of beings, whom Providence has appointed to be their slaves; and the clergy, so far from

from endeavouring to correct the pride and insolence of these haughty nobles, by teaching them the rules of morality and virtue, and by convincing them that the common people are their fellow-creatures, take every opportunity to join the nobles to oppress and to tyrannize over their fellow-subjects.

In all the Roman Catholic countries the common people go to the clergy to confess their sins and to receive absolution before they receive the sacrament: in Poland, when any of the farmers or of the inferior classes of people complain to the clergy of the ill usage which they have suffered from their tyrannical masters, and express that resentment for the same which oppressed human nature is apt to do, they are informed that eternal damnation will be the consequence if they make any resistance to the will of their masters, and they are refused absolution, except they promise faithfully to follow the directions of the clergy respecting this matter.

The power which the nobility, who only can be the proprietors of fiefs in this state, have usurped over their slaves is beyond all description: they pretend that the kings of Poland have at different times granted them certain rights and prerogatives over their slaves, as they call them, which are not only contrary to the laws of God and nature, but also to the ancient fundamental laws of this republic, and therefore are null in themselves, although upon these grants they have, in conjunction with the clergy, founded a species of tyranny and oppression which is not to be described.

When the ancient foedal laws were introduced into Poland, all those who held lands under the proprietor of the fief were

obliged to follow him as their captain to the war whenever their country was attacked, in the same manner as he was obliged to follow the king as sovereign lord of the state for the same purpose: this is the only legal authority which the Polish nobility have over their vassals, and there is not at present any Pole who will lead his supposed slaves into the field against a common enemy, and consequently, as he has broken the original contract and title whereby he held his fief, I will call upon their most able advocates to shew cause why the farmers and inferior classes of people in Poland are not as free and as justly and legally entitled to the property which they possess as the proprietors of the fiefs are to their respective fiefs, seeing that no prescription can be pleaded for any custom or practice which is contrary to the laws of God and nature, as well as to the fundamental laws of the state.

On the contrary, the Polish nobility and clergy pretend that these unhappy people have been in a state of slavery for time immemorial, that they have been annexed to and bought and sold with the lands upon which they subsist, and that consequently they are to be regarded as the absolute property of the proprietors of such lands; they moreover add, that their authority over these people has been established and even explained by the laws of Poland for more than 200 years past; that they have thereby been authorized to buy and to sell them with the land, like so many sheep or horses; and if they offend in any respect their lords may put them to death without subjecting themselves to any punishment more than paying a small fine.

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I am persuaded that such of my readers as feel for the unhappiness and misery of their fellow-creatures will be shocked at hearing this extraordinary but just account of the Polish government, especially when they reflect that such acts of tyranny and oppression are not only countenanced but even recommended by those who call themselves the pastors of the Christian church. By the ancient constitution of Poland no subject was obliged to obey any law to which he had not consented by himself or by his representative; and by perusing the history of this republic with the greatest attention, I could not discover one instance wherein those people directly or indirectly consented to be treated in the barbarous manner that they are at present; on the contrary, there are many legal protests entered against the nobility and clergy respecting their treatment of those people, but they were no more regarded than those which were entered against their proceedings respecting the Dissidents; and therefore I must again observe, that for the reasons before-mentioned all the laws which have been made by the nobles and clergy to enslave the rest of nation are null in themselves, tyrannical, and infamous, and that those poor unhappy wretches, who have so long groaned under the oppressive loads which have been laid upon their shoulders, would be justified before God and men by taking up arms and demanding satisfaction of those oppressors for all the injuries which they and their fathers have received.

By perusing the foregoing chapter it will be manifest that the Roman Catholic religion is the national religion in this state; the Polish church is governed by the primate and the rest of the archbishops and bishops, together with the parochial clergy: the convents and other religious houses are regulated much in the same manner as they are in other Roman Catholic countries.

In all matters of dispute respecting religious affairs, from the primate's court there is an appeal to the Pope's Nuncio, and from the Nuncio to Rome.

The power of executing judicial sentences is invested in the palatines, and is through them communicated to the inferior officers.

The ordinary charges of law-suits in this country are very moderate; but as both the lawyers and the judges are corrupt beyond all description, it would be a piece of absurdity for a poor man to go to law with another who is rich, or with one of the nobility; if his case is ever so just and clear, he will be sure to lose it.

Titles to landed property, when they come into dispute, are generally decided by a deputation from all the nobility of the province where such landed property is situated; and when one of the parties is not too rich and powerful, and the matter is very clear, this tribunal sometimes decides according to the rules of justice.

In all criminal cases, where the fact is not very clearly proved, the Polish judges are not very severe, and the accused person is permitted to purge himself by oath, to which is often added the oaths of some other persons, who are to vouch for his innocence and integrity. Capital punishments are not very common in Poland; if the criminal is a slave his master endeavours to save him, as his death will be a considerable loss to him; if the accused person is noble he generally escapes, be the crime ever so flagrant, as he cannot be arrested before he is tried and
condemned,

condemned, and therefore he has time sufficient to make his escape. All capital crimes against the king or against the state are by the ancient laws of the republic to be punished with death; but the rigour of these laws is generally softened, and the criminal is sentenced to be banished for ever from the kingdom. There are no crimes so severely punished in Poland as those which are committed against the clergy, and which are generally judged in their courts of law, as a person might much sooner expect to receive mercy and forgiveness from an enraged Tartar or a Calmouck than from one of this sacred order.

The sentences of the marshal of a confederation, like those of the inquisitors of Venice, are severe and terrible, and are immediately carried into execution: there is no appeal from them, neither is there any possibility of escaping: they are not authorized by law, and are only given on extraordinary occasions, when they pretend that the republic is in danger, and therefore cannot be pardoned by the king, like those crimes which are committed against the laws of the state.

C H A P. III.

Of the MANNERS and CUSTOMS of the POLISH Nation.

AS the air in the greatest part of the Polish territories is for the most part very cold and sharp, the common people in general are of a strong and hardy constitution, which is likewise assisted by their coarse fare and by hard exercise: they are taller
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and better made men in general than the Russians, and are capable of undergoing great fatigues: they are extremely ignorant and brutal, and great bigots to what they call their religion: they give themselves up entirely to the direction of their priests, so that if the latter were to order them to live upon hay and straw like horses, they would think themselves obliged to obey them: very few of them can either write or read, and a few prayers, which they offer up to the Virgin Mary and to their patron saints, are the whole of their religion, except we add thereto their keeping Lent and the fast-days, and going now and then to church to hear mass said in a language of which they do not understand one word: they have no idea of morality and the social virtues; and if we may judge from their manners, the scenes of tyranny and oppression in which they are born, and through which they are daily struggling, have in some measure changed the faculties of their minds, as they appear in many respects like a race of beings of an inferior nature. They have no kind of learning or education among them, neither do they appear to have any desire or inclination for it; and except learning a few prayers by rote, as I have before observed, of the true use and meaning of which they have a very imperfect idea, four or five millions of people in this state have no other knowledge of the Christian religion, although there is as much money sent yearly to Rome for pontifical trumpery as would establish free schools for giving a moderate education to the whole nation.

The general character of the better sort of people in Poland, like those of Russia, is rather to be contented with a superficial knowledge of things than to pursue their studies to any considerable degree; indeed the effects of this disposition are more

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or less visible in all orders of men in this state, which may be divided into four different classes. 1st. The nobility and gentry. 2d. The clergy. 3d. The merchants and citizens. 4th. The farmers, labourers, and soldiers. I have already observed that the Polish nobility and gentry are equally free and independent, and except those who are in office under the republic, and those who have large estates, their privileges are the same. From the connections which they have had for above 100 years past with France, they appear at first view to be very polite and well bred; but there is no nation in Europe where this class of people is so much debauched and corrupted as they are at present in Poland: having no controul upon their actions, and as the Monks and inferior clergy, who are their confessors, depend in some measure upon them, so that they have always absolution, they give a loose to their passions, and to tyranny and oppression add luxury and brutality.

It is true, their independency and the arbitrary power which they have over their slaves, together with their want of a moral education, contribute greatly to that state of degeneracy in which they are at present: they regard themselves as so many little sovereigns in their respective fiefs, and look upon their fellow-creatures as their personal property; for, as I have already observed, the riches of a nobleman or gentleman in this kingdom arise from the number of their slaves. Every slave or farmer has a certain portion of land assigned him, with a house for the use of his family, and from which neither he nor any of his family dare remove: he is obliged to work five days in the week for his lord, and on the sixth day he is allowed to cultivate this piece of land to raise grain and other necessaries for the use of himself and family; and besides this he is obliged to obey his lord's will

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in every thing for which he is called upon. If the more civilized part of mankind were invested with such an absolute power over their fellow-creatures, from which there was no appeal, I am afraid, like many of our West-India planters and modern Nabob-makers, they would not be much less tyrannical and oppressive, and consequently we must attribute the want of humanity and of the social virtues in the principal part of the Polish nobility to the extreme viciousness of their government and to the infamous conduct of their clergy, who countenanced and even promoted the usurped power and authority which the nobility have at present over their fellow-creatures, subjects, and Christians.

The clergy in Poland, as I have already observed, are not very learned, but they are extremely bigoted, and have a great ascendancy over the common people, not only in spiritual, but in temporal matters; in the former they are regarded as the representatives of Jesus Christ, and all their dictates are implicitly obeyed; in the latter they have at present usurped the greatest part of the judicial authority of the state, and from the great power which they have in the senate and in the diets, a considerable part of the legislative authority likewise, especially as when the diets were dissolved without coming to any resolution, the pressing affairs of the republic were regulated in the senate, where the clergy have always a majority of voices: but there is no part of Europe perhaps where they have made a greater abuse of their power, considering the obstinacy and independency of the nobles, than in this kingdom; they have usurped the greatest part of the property as well as of the authority of the state; they have been the principal cause of reducing several millions of people, though they were their fellow-creatures and
Christians,

Christians, to such a state of slavery and oppression as is a disgrace to every civilized and well-regulated society; they have been the cause of all the injustice and persecution which have been practised against the Dissidents, and of all the troubles which have been brought upon the kingdom in consequence of them; in what light therefore are we to regard these disturbers of society, and these oppressors of mankind?

The citizens and merchants of this state, except those of Dantzic, are not at all intelligent in trade and commerce; almost all the internal trade of the kingdom, and some of the foreign trade, is carried on by the Jews, who, together with the merchants of Dantzic, buy up their grain and salt at a very cheap rate, and send them down the Vistula for exportation. The citizens are very bad mechanics and artizans, being almost totally unacquainted with all the modern, ingenious, and useful improvements in the mechanical arts: they have no idea of invention; so that in all such things as require ingenuity or neatness, they are obliged to have recourse to strangers, or at least to be served by those who have studied their respective trades in foreign countries.

There are undoubtedly men of good natural talents among the citizens and trading part of the Polish nation; but, in the first place, they are kept very poor by the Jews, who being protected by the nobility carry on almost all the inland trade of the kingdom; secondly, they are not properly instructed in their respective trades; and thirdly, they are kept in a state of oppression, and are in many respects denied the common rights of mankind.

The farmers and labourers, who form the bulk of the people, are in such a deplorable and wretched situation as would draw tears of compassion from every humane and well-disposed person: the situation of the negroes in many of our West-India plantations is superior to theirs; they have no other ideas but those of tyranny and slavery; the wretchedness of their situation makes them indolent and careless about life, as they have reflection enough to perceive that coarse food and raiment are all they can expect in this life: but those among them, to whom nature has given any talents, have sensibility enough at times to feel the weight of their oppression, which destroys all kind of emulation, and, through resentment, prevents them from doing any thing more for their oppressors than they are forced to do by acts of violence.

The poor, and those who are past their labour, are beyond all description miserable, as there are very few public foundations for their support: the clergy, who live in superfluity and elegance, like the priest and the Levite in the gospel, will do nothing for these poor unhappy wretches; and certainly nothing but their great insensibility and ignorance could keep them in such an unhappy state: in many parts of the kingdom their poverty is so great, that they are obliged to live in holes of the earth, to feed upon the flesh of wild beasts which they catch in hunting, and upon the fruit and roots which grow wild, and to cover themselves with the skins of those beasts.

Undoubtedly this kind of life is very common among the Tartars, Indians, and other barbarous nations, where all the inhabitants are equally free and live in a state of nature; but I believe there is no civilized and Christian country in the known world,

world, where human beings are reduced to such a state of misery and distress as they are in Poland; and when we consider that these people have been brought into this humiliating and barbarous situation by the pride, covetousness, and unfeeling disposition of those who pretend to be the ministers of Jesus Christ, it must fill every thinking person with amazement, and make him look with horror and detestation upon this degenerate priesthood.

All the nobility and the better sort of citizens in Poland follow the customs of the other states of Europe respecting their dress; indeed in some articles of dress they retain their original modes and fashions, and other nations copy from them. The Polish ladies in general are handsome and well made, but they have not all that delicacy which could be desired in their sex; for, like the Amazons of old, they chose rather to conquer at the head of armed battalions of their vassals than by their own peculiar charms. As liberty and independency seem to be one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Polish nobles, their ladies are no less distinguished for their heroism, resolution, and activity: it is not very common in this country to see a lady who is troubled with the vapours, or with any kind of what is commonly called nervous disorders. Notwithstanding the great connections which they have had for more than a century past with the French, they have not yet adopted that disagreeable practice of painting themselves to that degree as is used in many other states of Europe; indeed, as nature has been very liberal in giving them fine complexions, it would be unnatural and cruel to the last degree to hide her inimitable favours by the rude covering of Indian barbarity.

By the laws of Poland all the infantry of the crown are to be recruited out of the farmers and day-labourers, and this is the reason why this corps of troops is in such a wretched situation: the nobility and clergy will not part with any of those people whose daily labour is to support their luxury and extravagance; when any of those poor creatures offend or presume to disobey their task-masters in any respect, if the latter are not barbarous enough to kill them immediately, they are sent into the army to receive a punishment.

The Dissidents, who are not under the direction of the Romish clergy, by opposing the usurped power and authority of the nobles have regained some of their ancient privileges, and are not at present in that distressed and deplorable situation that the Roman Catholics are in, although they are not yet to be envied; and how far that noble work which the empress of Russia has lately planned of giving freedom to all the farmers and labourers will extend to this kingdom, time alone will determine: certainly if this plan is effectually carried into execution, it will be of great national utility both in Russia and in Poland. The Danes have already found the advantage, and no person has suffered by it, and consequently, to say nothing of justice and humanity, but to view it only in a political light, we must regard it as an undertaking worthy of the great talents of this empress, and those who oppose it as tyrants and oppressors of the human species, who have neither judgment nor penetration enough to foresee the events of things.

C H A P. IV.

*Of the Laws, Customs, and Policy of POLAND respecting
AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES, and COMMERCE.*

TH E R E is no civilized state perhaps in the known world, except the territories of the Pope, where commerce is so badly regulated, and where manufactures are so little attended to and improved as they are at present in Poland: not only the laws of this state, but the customs and dispositions of the people are contrary to those of a commercial nation. By the fundamental laws of the state no merchant or manufacturer is at liberty to purchase any landed estate, or to acquire any real property in the kingdom; and the pride and arrogance of the nobility and clergy are such that they regard those useful members of society with the greatest contempt, and will in many respects scarcely give them the preference to their slaves: hence it is that their manufactures are in such an unimproved state, and that all their inland commerce is carried on by Jews and foreigners, who take every opportunity to cheat and defraud those who are supporting them. When Peter the First would enrich and civilize his Russian subjects he gave the greatest encouragement to strangers to come and settle in his dominions, especially to men of genius, merchants, and traders, whom he loaded with civilities and honours, which contributed not a little to produce the great end he proposed; but by pursuing a contrary course, Poland, which for several hundred years past has been regarded as a civilized nation, is now in a more uncultivated

cultivated and more unimproved state than any part of the Russian dominions.

The territories of the republic of Poland before the late division took place were of as great an extent as are those of France, and contained near eight millions of people, of whom near six millions were in the state of slavery and oppression before described: the nobility and gentry were about 400,000, many of whom likewise were so poor that they were obliged to serve their equals, with respect to rank, in the meanest offices; and the rest were the clergy, merchants, traders, and citizens; the latter, together with the farmers and labourers, have been for several centuries past, by the wickedness of the nobility and clergy, kept in a state of ignorance and oppression, and are denied the rights of human nature.

The Polish nobility were so extremely ignorant of their own real interests, that it was the general opinion the introduction of arts and commerce would tend to enlighten the people, and to stir up such an emulation among them as would make them turbulent and be highly injurious to their property, without considering how much the cultivation and improvement of the kingdom by manufactures and commerce would increase the value of their landed estates, and at the same time procure them all the necessaries and even the luxuries of life from among their fellow-subjects at a much cheaper rate than they can procure them from foreign states.

Dantzic is the only considerable sea-port which belongs to the territories of Poland; it is situated at the mouth of the Vistula, which runs through the kingdom from east to west, and is joined

joined by several considerable rivers, all which might be easily made navigable, if the trade and commerce of the kingdom were improved. Formerly all the natural productions of the kingdom, such as grain of all kinds, which they have in great abundance, salt, honey, wax, wool, skins, salt-meats, pot-ash, hemp, flax, and wood were bought up by the Jews at a very cheap rate, and sent down the Vistula to the merchants of Dantzic, by whom they were exported: a considerable part of the natural productions of the great duchy of Lithuania was exported at Riga, and at Memel in Prussia, and their returns were chiefly made in foreign manufactures and with some money. The quantity of the different kinds of grain which have heretofore been exported yearly from this kingdom was immense: many of the principal nobility entered into contracts with the Jews and with the merchants of Dantzic to take off all their grain at a certain fixed price; a measure extremely prejudicial to commerce, and which will always be the means of keeping a state in a poor and distressed situation.

I am entirely of the opinion of Monsieur de Montesquieu, who observes, that if Poland did not carry on any kind of commerce, the common people would be much happier than they are at present. Many of the nobility, who possess great tracts of lands, have nothing but their grain to procure themselves the articles of luxury, and press their labourers to have a great quantity of this commodity to send to foreign markets to procure those articles: if therefore they could not find a market for this great necessary of life, they would be obliged to give it to their people to live, and their great estates would become such a burden to them, that they would be obliged to divide them with their tenants. Necessity would oblige the common people to manufacture

facture their wool into cloth; and the rich, who always love luxury, and who would not be able to procure it from any foreign state, would encourage the poor to work; and therefore this nation would soon become flourishing, unless she became barbarous, which the laws might very easily prevent. The measures which the king of Prussia has lately taken to distress Dantzic, and to interrupt the exportation of the natural productions of Poland, will not at all answer the end which he has proposed: this prince may be a great general as well as a tyrant, but he is not a great politician: acts of violence will never make his subjects enter into commerce, nor force the Poles and the inhabitants of Dantzic to commit all their property to his direction. If the other states of Europe will suffer him to conquer this city, he may then obtain the end which he proposed, namely, the being master of all the exports of Great Poland, and of regulating the price of the grain of this kingdom as he thinks proper; but as long as this port continues free he never will be able to carry his point. In the treaty of commerce which he has lately concluded with the republic of Poland, it is stipulated that all the merchandize imported from the ports and towns of Prussia into Poland are only to pay two *per cent.* duty; but such merchandize as are landed at Dantzic, and from thence brought into Poland, are to pay twelve *per cent.* It will appear at first sight that the Poles were forced into this treaty, otherwise they would never give the preference to strangers who were taking every measure to oppress them; but still it will not answer the king of Prussia's design. Dantzic is an excellent port, and there is a navigation by the Vistula from thence to the interior parts of the kingdom, whereby all kinds of merchandize may be imported and exported with great facility: it is true, that as the Vistula passes through Prussia, the king
may

may lay a heavy duty upon such merchandize, and thereby distress both the Poles, the Dantzickers, the Hollanders, and all who are concerned in this trade; but as he has no good sea-port which has a communication with the Vistula, his subjects will never be able to import and export heavy merchandize to and from Poland without the greatest inconveniencies, except they pass by the port of Dantzic.

The soil is rich and good in most of the provinces of Poland, and produces all kinds of grain, excellent pasture, and all the natural productions that can be raised in such a northern climate: there are mines of salt in different parts of the kingdom, and yet, notwithstanding the country is well watered with fine rivers, as I have already observed, abounding with grain and cattle, all the common people and a great part of the nobility are in a state of poverty not to be described. The nobles sell their natural productions to Jews and foreigners at a very low price, and pay those foreigners exorbitantly for those articles of luxury of which they are in want: moreover the Poles in general are very idle and lazy; the better sort of people through pride, and the common people through resentment: they feel the weight of their oppression and will not exert themselves in favour of their oppressors. I am persuaded that two millions of people, who would work moderately on the cultivation of the ground, and were to enjoy the fruits of their labour, would do as much as six millions of the Poles in their present situation. Nothing makes the common people more idle and careless than oppression, as they have reflection enough to perceive, that if they toil and labour ever so much, common coarse food and raiment are all that they can expect, they therefore think of little else than to sleep away their time, except they are

roused to action by violence or new acts of oppression. Besides the exportation of grain and of all the other articles before-mentioned by Dantzic, Riga, and Memel, Poland sends vast quantities of grain and salt into Germany, together with cattle and horses in abundance; a great part of the Prussian cavalry troops are mounted upon Polish horses. Though foreign merchants and traders gain considerably by buying and selling in Poland, yet there are very few foreigners, except Jews, who chuse to establish themselves in this country if they can have an establishment in any other neighbouring state: if they give any credit they are sure to be duped by eight persons in ten; and a merchant might as well attempt to remove a mountain as attempt to recover money from a Polish nobleman by law: moreover merchants and traders are so universally despised in this republic, that no person of this class who is not extremely mean, low, and illiterate, would ever think of establishing himself in such a country.

It is a general observation, that no kingdom can be brought into a flourishing situation, in proportion to her powers, by agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, while the bulk of her subjects are in a state of slavery. Many of the kings and of the great nobles of Poland have taken much pains to introduce the arts and manufactures into this country, but without any effect; so that they are at present in the same situation in the greatest part of the Polish dominions that they were in 200 years since: a slave will never make a good manufacturer or artizan; he will never apply himself to works of this kind. Upon the whole therefore I must make the same observation upon Poland respecting this matter, that I have already done upon Russia, which is, that this kingdom will still continue in a state of
poverty

poverty and ignorance of the fine arts and manufactures till the whole system of their government is changed, and till the bulk of the people are suffered to enjoy the natural rights of mankind, and to think and act like human beings.

C H A P. V.

Of the REVENUES and RESOURCES of this Kingdom, and of her MILITARY FORCES.

POLAND has no fixed revenue for the support of her military and civil government, but this has been augmented and diminished according as the different diets have thought it necessary. The revenues appointed for the support of the king and of the dignity of the crown arose heretofore from certain lands which were vested in the crown, from the produce of the salt-works, and from the different custom-houses of the kingdom, which all together made but a very moderate revenue, never exceeding 200,000 l. sterling a year, and sometimes not amounting to 100,000 l. yearly. Since the kingdom has been divided the salt-works and some of the crown lands have been seized upon by the empress-queen of Hungary and Bohemia, the the produce of the custom-houses in Prussia by the king of Prussia, and another part of the crown lands and part of the customs of Mohilow by the empress of Russia. How the crown revenue is to be established at present some future diet must determine, as well as upon the means of raising a proper revenue to support the civil and military government of the kingdom,

which is in the greatest disorder and confusion. The nobility, who are the law-givers of the republic, are also the principal support of it: by the ancient laws of this state the nobility upon all great occasions are obliged to take the field on horseback, and if these laws were properly carried into execution they would form a body of above 100,000 men. This great army, which is called the *Pospolite*, as there are always divisions in Poland, is very ill governed and moves with great difficulty: they have no discipline, subordination, or experience, but as they are always animated by the love of liberty they will always be formidable when they act in concert: they may be vanquished, dispersed, or even kept in slavery, but they will soon throw off the yoke when the great power that crushed them down is removed; and this is the reason why they never would suffer any considerable fortifications to be built in the heart of their country, they would themselves be the ramparts of the republic, and would never suffer any of their kings to build fortresses, fearing that, instead of keeping them to defend the republic, they would make use of them to destroy their liberties. The *Pospolite* never takes the field but by the order of the diet, except the danger is very great, and in that case they are to obey the simple order of the king. When Charles the Twelfth invaded Poland, Augustus ordered the *Pospolite* to take the field and to join his Saxon army: but as the Poles at this time feared the Saxons more than they did the Swedes, and as the primate and several of the principal nobility of the kingdom and all the Sobieski party were in the king of Sweden's interest, they refused to obey him.

Before the territories of the republic were divided, their ordinary army was 36,000 men, which composed two corps independent of

of each other; this of Poland was fixed at 24,000 men, and the corps of Lithuania was 12,000, of which two thirds were cavalry: these two bodies of troops are commanded by two generals, who are independent of each other, and though they are named by the king, they are not obliged to give an account of their operations but to the republic, and have an absolute authority over the troops; the colonels are likewise absolute masters of their regiments, and it is their business to find subsistence for them, and to pay them as well as they can; but, being rarely paid themselves, they destroy the country and ruin the farmers to satisfy their avarice and that of their troops.

The Polish nobility appear with more magnificence in the field than in the towns; their tents are more elegantly ornamented than their houses: the cavalry, which is the greatest part of the army, is chiefly composed of gentlemen; they have fine horses, and their saddles, bridles, &c. are richly ornamented: the Hussars and the Pancernes particularly are fond of imitating the Turks in magnificence, and never take the field but when they are accompanied with their servants, who are to make a parade with their fine horses. The very contrast to their cavalry is their infantry; as much as the former is magnificently ornamented, the latter is badly clothed, badly armed, and often without any uniforms: this corps is recruited from among the meanest of the people, and they resemble an army of vagabond Tartars. The Polish troops have very little discipline among them; they attack with great fury, but if they are repulsed they immediately retire with great precipitation, and there is no possibility of rallying them. It is said, that the last diet has agreed to raise an army of 30,000 men for the support of the republic,

republic, who are to be regularly disciplined and paid; and for this purpose, as well as for the support of the civil government, they have agreed to lay a tax on all kinds of strong liquors, on all kinds of foreign merchandize which are imported into the kingdom, and on every article of luxury; upon salt, stamped paper, playing-cards, and chimnies: they have likewise doubled the poll-tax on the Jews; and their starosties, which heretofore paid one quarter of their yearly revenue, will for the future pay three eighths; and as by the death of the present starosts they become the property of the republic, they are to be leased out for fifty years, subject to the same tax. The clergy, who had heretofore found means to exempt themselves from almost every kind of tax, are now taxed almost equally to the other classes of people: the bishops are to pay 360,000 florins, which is about one thirtieth part of their revenue; and the inferior clergy are to pay some one quarter and some one half of the annual produce of their livings.

If the Poles had agreed to a plan of this kind some years before, they might in all probability have saved their country, and made a respectable figure among the states of Europe; but now it is too late; their best provinces are seized upon by strangers, and all their operations are dictated by those powers which united to annihilate their ancient form of government; and as these great powers have guaranteed to each other respectively the several districts which they have seized in Poland, I see no possibility that the Poles will ever be able to recover themselves in the present situation of things; how far some future arrangement of the political affairs of Europe may change their unhappy state, time alone will determine.

C H A P. VI.

Of the principal Causes of the various REVOLUTIONS and TROUBLES which have brought this Government to its present degenerated and distressed Situation.

WHEN we reflect upon the history which has been given of the rise and progress of this government, it will clearly appear that it was originally founded upon the most just and equitable principles, like all the rest of the ancient Gothic governments, and was well calculated for those days when mankind dealt honestly at least with their fellow-subjects, and united to support each other against their enemies; that wicked and ambitious clergy, who under pretence of propagating and supporting the just, benevolent, merciful, and humane doctrines of Jesus Christ, endeavoured to enslave, oppress, and impoverish their fellow-creatures, did not then disquiet this country; joint-tenants of the same soil, the Poles knew no master but him whom they had elected to be their prince and their general, and submitted to no laws but those which they made themselves; animated by the love of liberty and of his country, every member of the community was ready to sacrifice his life in the service of the state, and his most ardent wishes were to fight for and fall in her defence. But when the Roman Catholic clergy gained a footing in this kingdom, the face of things was immediately changed; instead of preaching the religion of Jesus Christ, founded upon the principles of charity, humanity, and brotherly love, they joined with those who called themselves nobles, to oppress

oppress and gain an ascendancy over the bulk of the people, not only by depriving them of their property by intrigues and artifices, and afterwards excluding them from their right of voting in all public affairs, but, as soon as these poor people were denied the enjoyment of their just and legal rights, they concurred with the nobles in passing laws to reduce them to a state of slavery, as they have done to the Dissidents in our days; however, fearing that these martial people, thus humbled and oppressed, should resist their measures, they not only threatened public excommunication and all the thunders of the Vatican to those who disobeyed them, and took every measure to keep the bulk of the people in a state of ignorance, but they refused absolution to those who came to confess their faults, and shewed the least inclination or desire to regain their liberties or privileges. Finding themselves oppressed on every side, and seeing no means whereby they could redress themselves, the common people, from being bold, active, and enterprising, fell into a state of idleness and despair; their country was no longer dear to them; they regarded their fellow-subjects as tyrants, and themselves as the most wretched of all the human race. But although the nobility and clergy had so far gained their point, and reduced their fellow-subjects to a state of poverty and distress, they were fearful lest some future king, dictated by the principles of justice and humanity, should attempt to redress the wrongs of these poor people, and restore them to their legal rights and privileges, and therefore they now directed their attacks against the authority of the crown, and before they would permit any future king to be crowned, they forced him to swear to support and to defend them in all their usurped rights and privileges, and to observe faithfully all the laws which they had unjustly made, and which they called the fundamental laws of the state. Thus
did

did these wicked and abandoned clergy, and these tyrannical nobles, insensibly reduce their fellow-subjects to that state of poverty and abject slavery in which they are at present, limit the power of the crown, pave the way to independency, and change the form of government from an elective monarchy to an aristocracy without controul, the most defective and tyrannical of all governments. We must look back to this source for the great cause of all the troubles, civil wars, and revolutions which for two or three centuries past have almost desolated this kingdom, and reduced her to the mean and wretched situation in which she is at present. Dismembering the provinces of the kingdom, and vesting the sovereign authority of different districts in different persons, which was heretofore practised by several kings of Poland, likewise contributed greatly to weaken the power of the crown and to increase the authority and independency of the nobles and clergy. Whenever there is a number of little independent governments, which are bordering upon sovereignties, in a state, the government of that state will be always weak and enervated, and as those little governors are generally so many tyrants, who are jealous of each other, the state will always be agitated like a troubled sea, and exhibit a scene of confusion and oppression. This has always been the case in Poland, and will continue so to be as long as the present form of government exists in this kingdom; for so long as confederacies are tolerated, and there are great numbers of slaves ready to obey the confederates, there will always be ambitious and ill-designing people enough to keep the government in a constant scene of confusion and discord. A state in such a situation will always be like a general whose army is ready to mutiny; he never will be in a condition to defend himself against an enemy, whilst his army is in this disposition, neither can a kingdom subsist whose govern-

ment is undermining itself. Poland has experienced this great truth; her own divisions and a viciousness of a part of her inhabitants, who would trample under foot the just rights and privileges of the others, have rendered her the prey of her ambitious enemies. In the year 1648, when this state appeared to be very formidable in Europe, her government would have been totally destroyed by the Cossacks and Tartars, if those robbers had not quarrelled about their plunder. Charles Gustavus and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden conquered this kingdom with great facility with a handful of troops, and if they had taken prudent measures might have established what government they thought proper, notwithstanding the boasted forces of the nobility; and we have lately seen a small body of Russian troops disperse all the idle parade of their associations. Though they have always been surrounded with enemies, the nobility and clergy would never suffer any regular military forces to be maintained and properly disciplined in the kingdom, fearing that they should be a check upon their illegal measures and tyranny: these sons of infamy and rapine would rather see their country destroyed by the Tartars, Turks, or by any other foreign state, than do justice to their injured fellow-creatures and subjects: notwithstanding the brave Sobieski so often saved them when they were at the brink of destruction, and again placed them upon a respectable footing among the other European states, to such a degree of degeneracy and corruption were they then arrived, and so great were their divisions and animosities against each other, that they refused the crown to his son in order to give it to a stranger with whom they were almost totally unacquainted; and when Augustus, from a principle of generosity, attempted to restore the state to its ancient splendor, they joined his enemies to dethrone him, after he had shewn his benevolent disposition towards

towards them in the government of the state, and spent several millions to save both them and their country from plunder and devastation.

This is an exact portrait of the Polish nobility and clergy, to whom we may justly apply the words of the holy Evangelist, "that a kingdom divided against itself can never stand."

F I N I S.

towards them in the government of the state, and spent several millions to save both them and their country from plunder and devastation.

This is an exact portrait of the British nobility and clergy, to whom we may justly apply the words of the Holy Evangelist, "that a kingdom divided against itself can never stand."

The first of these is the nobility, who are the most powerful and influential class in the state. They are the owners of the land, and the source of the wealth of the country. They are the patrons of the church, and the supporters of the government. They are the leaders of the nation, and the representatives of the people. They are the most powerful and influential class in the state. They are the owners of the land, and the source of the wealth of the country. They are the patrons of the church, and the supporters of the government. They are the leaders of the nation, and the representatives of the people.

The second of these is the clergy, who are the spiritual leaders of the nation. They are the teachers of the people, and the guides of their souls. They are the keepers of the faith, and the defenders of the church. They are the most powerful and influential class in the state. They are the owners of the land, and the source of the wealth of the country. They are the patrons of the church, and the supporters of the government. They are the leaders of the nation, and the representatives of the people.

I N D E X.

N.B. The Roman Numerals distinguish the VOLUMES, and the
Figures refer to the PAGES.

A.

A B O, peace of, between Russia and Sweden, ii. 223.

Abokam, a Russian archdeacon, becomes the leader of a turbulent sectary there, ii. 88. Excites the Strelitz guards to sedition, *ibid.*

Accusers, false, how punished in Poland, ii. 436.

Aland, the island of, reduced by the czar Peter, ii. 160.

Alberoni, cardinal, minister of Spain; his intrigues with baron de Goertz, the Swedish minister, ii. 164, 169.

Albert, archduke, sent by Philip II. of Spain, with a large army into the Netherlands, as governor, i. 42. Is defeated by prince Maurice, 44. Takes Ostend, 45. Offers them peace as free states, 46. Concludes a twelve years truce with the States, 49. Takes Wesel in retaliation for the seizure of Juliers, 50. Concludes a peace with the States, 51.

Albert, of Brandenburg, chosen grand master of the Teutonic order, ii. 458. His treaty with Sigismund king of Poland, *ibid.*

Albert, of Mecklenbourg, elected king of Sweden, on the expulsion of Magnus Smeck, i. 448. Pursues the like arbitrary schemes, 449. Is defeated and taken prisoner by Margaret of Norway, 452. Renounces his claim to obtain his liberty, *ibid.*

Albert Tredenti, of Brandenburg, receives investiture of the duchy of Prussia, from Sigismund Augustus king of Poland, ii. 465.

Alençon, duke de, invited from France to be governor of the Netherlands, i. 36. Is expelled Antwerp for his haughty violence, *ibid.*

Alexander, duke of Lithuania, elected king of Poland, ii. 454. Unites his two do-

minions, *ibid.* His death and character, 457.

Alexander Newski, is made grand duke of Russia, by the Tartar conquerors, ii. 24. Is canonized, and a monastery dedicated to him, *ibid.*

Alexis, the son of the czar Peter I. marries the daughter of the duke of Brunswick Wolfenbuttle, ii. 158. Birth of his son Peter, and death of his wife, 163. His education and character, 171. His father's letters to him, 172. Retires to Naples, 174. Returns, and is obliged to renounce the right of succession, 175. Is tried and condemned to die, 176. His death, *ibid.* Reflections on his fate, 178. His son Peter declared successor by the empress Catharine, 307.

Alexis Michaelowitz, his accession to the throne of Russia, ii. 77. His marriage, 78. Tyranny of his minister Morosow, *ibid.* He appeases a popular tumult against Morosow, 79. His edict against the oppressions of the nobles, 80. Engages in a war with Poland, *ibid.* Abusive letters between him and the sultan Mahomet IV. 81. His prudent government, death, and character, 82.

Alfred the Great, the first prince who checked the piracies of the Danes, i. 186.

Altona, account of the Danish state lottery there, i. 412.

Alva, duke de, deputed by Philip II. of Spain to attend the conference at Bayonne, i. 16. Is sent with an army to awe the Netherlands, 20. Succeeds the duchess of Parma as governor, 21. Exerts his authority with rigor, *ibid.* Repulses the prince of Orange, and imposes fresh taxes, 23. His inhuman victories at Naerden and Haarlem, 26. Is recalled, 27.

Amsterdam, the sovereign authority in the city of, explained, i. 53. Its revenues,

I N D E X.

57. The Jews driven from Antwerp by the duke d'Alva, settle there and at Rotterdam, 104. Credit of its bank, how raised, 109. Some account of this bank, 110. Natural security of the city, 117. Great exchange and banking business carried on there, 125.
- Anderson, chancellor of Sweden, his character, i. 514. His advice to Gustavus Ericson respecting the clergy, 515. His speech to the assembly of the States at Westeras, 524.
- Ann, duchess dowager of Courland, succeeds to the crown of Russia, ii. 216. Her death and character of her administration, 218.
- Ann Petrowna, daughter of the czar Peter I. is married to the duke of Holstein, ii. 200. Her death, 215.
- Antwerp, the Jews driven from, by the duke d'Alva, settle in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, i. 104.
- Apraxin, field-marshal of the Russian army, his misconduct in Prussia, ii. 226.
- Arcemboldi, John, the pope's legate, sent to dispose of indulgences in the north, i. 467. Discovers the designs of Christian king of Denmark, to the administrator of Sweden, 468.
- Archangel, in Russia, description of that province, ii. 4. Is fortified by the czar Peter, 120. State of exports and imports there, 324.
- Arnold, his account of the improvements in Denmark at the beginning of the thirteenth century, i. 198.
- Asoph, is besieged by the czar Peter, ii. 96. Is a second time besieged by him and taken, 100. Is ceded to the Prussians, 115. Is restored to the Turks, 155.
- Astracan, some account of that kingdom, ii. 8. Is conquered from the Tartars by the czar Iwan, 38.
- Augustus, elector of Saxony, is chosen king of Poland, ii. 518. His alliance with Russia and Denmark against Sweden, 519. Is defeated by Charles XII. of Sweden, 521. The cardinal primate pronounces his deposition, 522. Renews the order of the white eagle, 524. Charles makes himself master of great part of Saxony, 525. His mean submission, *ibid.* Is restored by the battle of Pultawa, 527. Persecutes the Dissidents, 528. Stops all proceedings against them, 534. His death and character, 535.
- Augustus, son of the preceding, elected king of Poland, ii. 536. Convokes a diet to redress grievances, 543. Checks the intended confederacy of count Potocki, 547. Orders a senatus consilium at Frawstadt, 552. His difference with the pope, 567. His electorate of Saxony seized by the king of Prussia, 570. Invests prince Charles of Saxony with the duchy of Courland, 579. His death, 584.
- Austria, Don John of, appointed governor of the Netherlands, i. 27. Accedes to the pacification of Ghent, 29. Seizes the castle of Namur, *ibid.* Dies, 30.
- B.
- Bank of Amsterdam, how it acquired its credit, i. 109. Some account of this bank, 110.
- Bar, a Polish confederacy formed there, under the starost of Krasinski, ii. 618. Their violent attempts against king Stanislaus Augustus, 621.
- Barneveldt, his opposition to Maurice prince of Orange, i. 136.
- Barter, in commerce, not sufficient to promote circulation and encourage industry, without the introduction of specie, i. 96.
- Basil, czar of Russia, intimidates the Crim Tartars into a treaty of peace, ii. 29. Enters into a commercial treaty with England, *ibid.* English description of his court and power, 30. His treaty of alliance with the emperor Maximilian of Germany, 31. How freed from a disadvantageous treaty with the kan of the Crim Tartars, 34.
- Basil Suiski is pardoned for conspiring against Griscza, the pretended Demetrius, czar of Russia, ii. 61. Forms a new attempt against him, *ibid.* Destroys him, 62. Is proclaimed czar, and takes an oath to observe justice, 64. A rebellion raised against him by Andrew Nogoy, 65. Is deposed, 67. Is made a monk, 68. Is poisoned in Poland, with all his family, 69.
- Batavia. See *Holland.*
- Bathow Kan, ravages the Russian empire with an army of Mogul Tartars, ii. 23.
- Bayonne, motive of the conference held there, i. 16.

Bestu-

I N D E X.

- Bestucheff**, chancellor of Russia, disgraced, ii. 227. Is restored, 254.
- Bills of Exchange**, how introduced into commerce, i. 105.
- Birkerett**, the code of laws so termed, formed in Denmark to check the oppressive conduct of the clergy, i. 204.
- Biron**, John Ernest, favourite of the czarina Anne, elected duke of Courland, ii. 217. Review of his conduct, 219. Is disgraced and sent into Siberia, 220. Is recalled, 233. His manifesto to the states of Courland, 575. His restoration insisted on by the empress of Russia, 579. His cause espoused by the king of Prussia, 581.
- Charles**, prince of Saxony, driven from Mittau by Russian troops, 583. His eldest son receives investiture, 595.
- Bohemia**, reduced to a province under the kingdom of Poland, ii. 364. Boleslas obliged to renounce all pretensions to it, 365. Wencislas, king of, elected king of Poland, 417.
- Boleslas**, duke of Poland, his prudent government, ii. 363. Receives the title of king from the emperor Otho, 364. Reduces Bohemia to a province, *ibid.* Is forced by the emperor Henry II. to renounce all pretensions to Bohemia, 365. His war with Russia, *ibid.* Defends Glogaw against the emperor, 366. His son Miecislaw betrayed into the emperor's hands, 367.
- Boleslas**, the son of Casimir king of Poland, his wars with the duke of Bohemia, ii. 378. Reduces Prussia, 379. His victory over the Hungarians, *ibid.* His expedition into Russia, 380. Conquers the country, 381. Desertion of his army, 382. His cruel severity against the deserters, 383. Kills the bishop of Cracow for opposing his tyranny, *ibid.* Is excommunicated and flies, 384. His son ensnared and poisoned by Uladislas, 386.
- Boleslas**, natural son of Uladislas king of Poland, manifestation of his early military talents, ii. 387. Is appointed to the command of the Polish army, 389. Gives the Pomeranians a great defeat, *ibid.* Is declared duke of Poland on the death of his father, 390. Takes the town of Belgard, and reduces the Pomeranians to peace, *ibid.* Defeats the emperor Henry V. 393. His victory over the Bohe-
- mians, *ibid.* His death and character, 394. Divides his kingdom into four governments among his sons, *ibid.*
- Boleslas**, the second son of Boleslas duke of Poland, the provinces left to him by his father, ii. 395. Is received as duke of Poland on the flight of his brother Uladislas, 396. His representation to the emperor Conrad, who espoused his brother's cause, 397. Reduces the emperor Frederic to peace, 398. His death and character, 399.
- Boleslas**, the son of Leszko duke of Poland, is driven out of his dominions by the Tartars, ii. 410. Is recalled, 411. His death and character, 412.
- Boris Godunow**, favourite of the czar Theodore, his brutal ambition, ii. 50. Poisons the czar, 52. Is elected czar, 53. Poisons himself, 58.
- Brandenbourg**, the marquisses of, murder Przemyslas king of Poland, ii. 416. Besiege Dantzic, 418. Character of the princes of this house, 421. Treaty of Welaw, between the elector of, and John Casimir king of Poland, 490. See *Prussia*.
- Brandt**, count, accusation against, i. 354. Is apprehended, 355. Alleged cause of his condemnation, 360. Secret history of, 424.
- Branicki**, count, general of the crown of Poland, opposes himself to the party of prince Czartorinski elected marshal by Russian influence, ii. 592.
- Britain and Russia**, state of the trade between, ii. 323.
- Bruhl**, count, fray between his retinue and that of the great treasurer of Poland, on account of precedence, ii. 540. The diet at Warsaw broken up on his account, 577. Dies, 584.
- Bulgarians**, antient, converted to the Christian faith, ii. 17.
- Burates**, some account of that people, ii. 13.
- Burgo-masters of Amsterdam**, their office and power, i. 55.
- Butterlin**, field-marshal, is appointed to the command of the Russian army acting against the king of Prussia, ii. 230. Is removed by the czar Peter III. 234.

C.

Calmar, the union of, translation of this law, i. 215. Is renewed, 222.

I N D E X.

- Calumniators, how punished in Poland, ii. 436.
- Canute, king of Denmark, obtains the kingdom of England, i. 189. His character and civil regulations, 190.
- Canute IV. king of Denmark, renders himself odious by his liberality to the clergy, i. 194. His death, 195.
- Carlsroon, state of the Swedish navy there, i. 665.
- Casimir, prince, son of Miecislav II. king of Poland, is left under the guardianship of his mother Richsa, ii. 370. Is sent to Paris for education, 371. Becomes a monk in Italy, 374. Is recalled to be king of Poland, and purchases the pope's absolution, *ibid.* Marries the sister of Jaraslaw great duke of Russia, 375. Revolt of the palatine Masos, *ibid.* Is assisted by the emperor Henry III. against Predislav king of Bohemia, 376. His grants and concessions to the clergy, 377. His death and character, *ibid.*
- Casimir, the youngest son of Boleslas duke of Poland, is left by his father to the support of his four elder brothers, ii. 395. Is elected duke of Poland, 400. Relieves the farmers from the obligation of entertaining the proprietors of fiefs in their journies, 401. Gains a victory over the Russians, 403. His death and character, 404.
- Casimir, son of Uladislas Loketek, king of Poland, his father's instructions to him on his death-bed, ii. 425. His peace with the Teutonic knights, *ibid.* Grants the Jews peculiar privileges, 427. His wars and reformation of judicial proceedings, 428. Protects the farmers against the oppressions of their lords, 429. His vices, 430. His death and character, 431.
- Casimir, duke of Lithuania, succeeds his brother Uladislas as king of Poland, ii. 447. His contests with the Poles for the independency of Lithuania, *ibid.* Protects the Prussians against the Teutonic knights, 449. Spirited remonstrance to him in the diet at Petrikow, *ibid.* His death and character, 452.
- Casimir, John, elected king of Poland, ii. 488. His wars with the Cossacks, 489. His treaty at Welaw with the elector of Brandenburg, 490. How he acquired the title of orthodox king, 492. Resigns his crown, 496. Retires to a monastery in France, 498. His character, *ibid.*
- Cassius Longinus, the Roman general, is defeated by the Germans, i. 154.
- Catherine, a Livonian captive, is married by Peter the Great, czar of Russia, ii. 122. Her marriage publicly declared, 146. Her character, 147. Attends the czar in his Turkish campaign, 149. Rescues him and his army from the distressed situation the Turks had reduced him to, 153. Accompanies the czar in his southern tour, 164. The right of succession conferred on her son Peter, 175. Is exculpated from the charge of causing the death of Alexis, 178. Is crowned, 199. Succeeds to the crown on the death of Peter, 201. The first acts of her government, 206. Declares Peter Alexiowitz her successor, 207. Her death, 208. Her testament, *ibid.* Her character, 211.
- Catherine Alexiowna of Anhalt Zerbst, married to Peter Foedorowitz, great duke of Russia, ii. 224. A coolness observed between her and her husband, *ibid.* Is delivered of a son named Paul Petrowitz, 225. Receives the lands of the late empress Elizabeth, on the accession of her husband, 233. Peter determines to divorce her, 243. Forms a party who declare her sole empress of all the Russias, 245. Her manifesto, 247. Death of Peter, 251. Reflections on this Revolution, *ibid.* Is crowned at Moscow, 254. The first acts of her government, 257. Undertakes the establishment of a new code of laws, 258. Objections to her plan, 259. Her conduct toward the archbishop of Rostow who had libelled her, 264. Forms a defensive alliance with the king of Prussia, 267. Death of prince Iwan, 269. Her conduct on this occasion, *ibid.* Her declarations and conduct on the contested election of a king of Poland, 271. Sends forces to influence the election in favour of count Poniatowski, 273. Annexes all church lands to the crown, and assigns pensions to the clergy, 274. Her memorial to the Polish diet relating to the Dissidents, 277. Her minister prince Repnin violates the freedom of the diet, 280. Her troops attacked by the Poles, 283. Her minister at Constantinople arrested, 285. Her answer to the Turkish declaration

I N D E X.

- claration of war, 286. Her acquisitions by the Turkish war, 288.
- Charlemagne, erects Flanders into a county, and gives forester the title of count, i. 4. Repulses the Danes, 185.
- Charles V. emperor of Germany, his gentle government of the Netherlands, i. 10.
- Charles Canutson elected king of Sweden, i. 227. Is expelled by Christian king of Denmark, 231, 460. Is taken prisoner, 462. Is restored, 463.
- Charles Gustavus, his accession to the crown of Sweden by the resignation of queen Christina, I. 545. His war against Poland, *ibid.* And Denmark, 546.
- Charles XI. king of Sweden, his army in Germany defeated, i. 546. His ill success against the Danes, 547. Reforms the ill administration of his government, 548. Suppresses the senate, 549. New models his administration, 550. His arbitrary means of recovering crown lands, 553. Regulates the militia, 554, 661. Is rendered absolute by concessions of the states, 555. Revises the laws, 557. Impoverishes his subjects to amass wealth, 558.
- Charles XII. of Sweden, his accession, i. 559. Combination of the neighbouring princes to ruin him, 560. His unexpected magnanimity, *ibid.* Reduces Denmark to peace, 561. Defeats the czar Peter at Narva, 562. His successes in Poland, 564. Defeats Augustus, 565. Deposes Augustus, 566. Defeats the czar again, 568. Is defeated by Peter at Pultawa, 570. His conduct in Turkey, 573. Returns to Sweden, 576. His new schemes, 578. Concludes peace with Russia, 580. His expedition to Norway, 581. His death and character, 582.
- Charles, prince of Saxony, is elected duke of Courland, ii. 572. His pretensions opposed by the return of Biron from exile in Siberia, 575. The empress of Russia insists on Biron's restoration, 579. Declaration of the king of Prussia against him, 581. Is driven from Mittau by Russian troops, 583. Offers to resign his pretensions to Courland if Russia would assist the elector his brother to obtain the kingdom of Poland, 585.
- China, and Russia, a treaty concluded between, ii. 94. History of the trade with, 183. New treaty with, 185.
- Chmielnicki, Bogdan, the Cossack, his cruel treatment by Jatiniski the Polish governor of Czesizin, ii. 486. Is made general of the Cossacks, and ravages Poland, 487. Puts himself under the protection of Russia, 490.
- Choczim, taken from the Turks by marshal Munich, ii. 218. Battle of, between John Sobieski and the Turks, ii. 504.
- Christian of Oldenburg elected king of Denmark, i. 227. Articles of capitulation signed by him, 229. Is accepted by the Norwegians for their king, 231. Acquires the crown of Sweden, *ibid.* Is elected duke of Sleswic and count of Holstein, 232. Erects Copenhagen into a university, 235. His death and character, *ibid.*
- Christian II. of Denmark, his education and character, i. 241. Marries the sister of the emperor Charles V. 244. Establishes a number of regular troops, 245. His tyrannical conduct, 246. His commercial regulations, 248. Sweden submits to him, *ibid.* His chief ministers, 249. Cuts off the principal Swedish nobility, 252. His laws, 256. Prohibits ecclesiastics from holding lands, 257. His law against plundering shipwrecks, 258. Jutland revolts against him, 261. His precipitate flight, 265. His cruel imprisonment, 269. Ineffectual attempt for his restoration, 276. His wars with Sweden, 465.
- Christian III. king of Denmark, his tumultuous election, i. 279. Destroys the power of the bishops, and encourages the protestant religion, 283. Norway annexed to the crown of Denmark, 288.
- Christianity, how first spread over Europe, i. 6. Churches endowed, and a settled maintenance for the clergy established, 7.
- Christina, queen of Sweden, her accession, i. 544. Resigns the government, 545.
- Christophle II. king of Denmark, his tyrannical reign, i. 206.
- Christophle of Bavaria, elected king of Denmark on the exclusion of Eric, i. 224. Acquires Norway and Sweden, 225. His dying declaration, 226.
- Cimbria, antient, the provinces comprehended under that name, i. 151. The Romans disturbed by an irruption of, 152. Are unexpectedly attacked by the consul Papirius.

I N D E X.

- Papirius Carbo, 153. Their repeated successes against the Romans, 154. Are defeated by the consul Marius, 158. Traditional account of king Wodin, 160. Motive of their destroying the western empire, 165.
- Climate, its natural influence on commerce, i. 87.
- Colberg, is besieged by the Russians, but is rescued by the Prussian general Werner, ii. 230. Is again besieged and taken by general Romanzow, *ibid.*
- Combat, judicial, the origin of, i. 183.
- Commerce, definition and characters of, i. 85. Balance of, how produced, 86. Particular branches of, how properly to be chosen, 87. Sumptuary laws, destructive to, and ineffectual among a rich people, 92. Exclusive privileges to particular companies prejudicial to the general commerce of a state, 93. The fewer hands any branch passes through, the better, 94. A preference of foreign commodities injurious to a country, 95. The proper uses of specie in, 96. The produce of mines only a branch of, 98. Agriculture and labour properly directed the surest supports of, *ibid.* The prices of commodities regulated by the quantity and the demand, 99. Depends greatly on the constitution and government of a state, 101. The general principles of in republics, 102. Republics established by the oppression and tyranny of monarchies, 103. Bills of exchange, how introduced into, 105.
- Commodities, the prices of, how regulated, i. 99.
- Confederacies in Poland, the nature of those associations explained, ii. 492, 631, 637.
- Conrad, duke of Mazovia, assumes the regency of Poland, during the minority of Boleslas the son of Leszko, ii. 408. Calls the knights of the Teutonic order to assist him against the Prussians, *ibid.* His agreement with them, 409.
- Copenhagen, the university of, founded, i. 235. Learning, how discouraged there, 376.
- Cossacks of the Ukraine, are formed under a regular government by Stephen Battori king of Poland, ii. 471. Their war with the Tartars, 473. Pretend to a right of voting at the election of a king of Poland, 482. Are oppressed and take arms, 484, 486. Ravage Poland under the conduct of Bogdan Chmielnicki, 487. Put themselves under the protection of Russia, 490. Invade Poland, 494. Are defeated by John Sobieski, 495.
- Council of state in the United Provinces, how formed, and its proper business, i. 62.
- Courland, brief account of that duchy, ii. 348. The nobility of, impowered to elect their own duke, 538. John Ernest Biron, elected duke of, 539. Prince Lewis of Brunswick Lunebourg elected duke on the exile of Biron, 549. The states of, desire prince Charles of Saxony for their duke, 571. Manifesto of Biron on his return from Siberia, 575. Biron's restoration insisted on by the empress of Russia, 579. Charles driven out by Russian troops, 583.
- Cracow, short account of that town, ii. 347. By whom founded, 351. Is elected into an archbishopric, 361. The bishop of, assassinated at the altar, by king Boleslas, 383.
- Cracus, is elected sovereign of Poland, ii. 350. Found the city of Cracow, 351.
- Culm, the territory of, ceded to the Teutonic knights by Conrad regent of Poland, ii. 409.
- Custrin, in Prussia, taken by the Russian general Fermer, ii. 227.
- Czar, how this title was gained by the grand duke of Russia, ii. 23, 35.
- Czartoriski, prince Adam, chosen marshal of the Polish diet by the Russian party, ii. 592. Goes to Rome to notify the election of Stanislaus Augustus, 579. Returns with a brief for the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs, 598.
- D.
- Dalecarlia, an insurrection raised there against Christian II. by Gustavus Vasa, i. 254, 491. Revolt there by the clergy, 531.
- Dambrowcka, princess, daughter of Boleslas duke of Bohemia, marries Miecislaw king of Poland on condition of his receiving the Christian religion, ii. 359.
- Dantzic, the castle of, founded by Valdemar I. king of Denmark, i. 197. Some account of that city, ii. 347. Is seized by the Teutonic knights, 418. Revolts against Stephen Battori king of Poland, but is reduced

I N D E X.

- reduced by Mark Sobieski, 470. Obtains the right of voting for the election of a king, 482. Disturbance there, 562. Account of the trade of that city, 646. Remarks on the king of Prussia's conduct to that city, 648.
- Demetrius III. czar of Russia, defeats an army of Tartars who invade his dominions, ii. 27.
- Demetrius, son of the czar Iwan IV. is killed by Boris Godunow, ii. 51. Is personated by Griscza Utrepiou, 56. His mother Mary acknowledges Griscza to be her son, 58. His body taken up and exhibited, 64. Another Demetrius appears, 65.
- Denmark, the provinces of which this kingdom is composed, i. 146. Was first peopled by colonies of Scythians, 151. Expeditions of the Cimbri, 152. Is subdued by Wodin, whose son Sciold was the first king, 163. The ancient form of government there, as described by Tacitus, 167. Pecuniary compensations for offences, 181. The judicial combat, 183. Modes of trial by the judgment of God, *ibid.* Piracies on the coasts of England, 184. Extensive ravages committed by the Danes, 185. Their method of making war and fighting, 186. Gorman the first king who formed any civil regulations there, 187. The Christian religion received, *ibid.* But gives way to the profession of piracy, 188. Canute obtains the crown of England, 189. Forms a code of laws for Denmark, 190. Treaty between Hardy Canute and Magnus king of Norway, 193. Great donations made to the clergy by Canute IV. 194. His death, 195. Valdemar I. his wife government, 196. The feudal law admitted into, 197. Improvements of the country in the beginning of the thirteenth century, 198. Valdemar II. his prudent establishments, 199. The Jutland code of laws formed, 200. The Birkerett code of laws made to check the oppression of the people by the clergy, 204. A code formed for Livonia, 206. Means used by Christophle II. to acquire the crown, 207. His tyrannical conduct, 209. Succession of the crown to Margaret queen of Norway, 211. Who gains also the sovereignty of Sweden, 213. Translation of the law called the Union of Calmar, 215. Death of Margaret, 219. The Union of Calmar renewed under Eric, 222. Eric expelled for his tyranny, 224. Christian of Oldenburg elected king by the diet at Roschild, 227. Articles of capitulation signed by him, 229. Is accepted as king by the Norwegians, 231. University of Copenhagen founded, 235. Accession of John, the son of Christian, to the three kingdoms, 236. A treaty of commerce formed with England, 238. Rebellion in Norway, 240. Education and character of Christian II. 241. Regular troops established, 246. A rebellion in Dalecarlia, 254. New laws published by Christian, 256. Ecclesiastics prohibited to hold lands, 257. Wrecks not to be plundered, 258. The bishops remonstrate against the law for the security of wrecks, 260. Insurrection in Jutland, 261. Precipitate flight of Christian, 265. Frederic duke of Holstein proclaimed king, 266. The reformed religion favoured, 270. Confusions relating to the succession, 272. Election of Christian III. 279. The power of the bishops destroyed, and the protestant religion encouraged, 283. Norway annexed to the crown, 288. Invasion of the kingdom by Charles Gustavus king of Sweden, 293. Tyranny of the nobles, *ibid.* The crown made hereditary, 296. Translation of this act, 298. Form of government after this revolution, 317. Present code of Danish laws, 321. The several kinds of jurisdiction, *ibid.* Criminal processes, 325. Revenues of the ecclesiastics, 330. The farmers released from slavery, 335. Public care taken of the education of children, 340. Laws respecting the marine, 342. Laws concerning contracts, and successions, 347. Laws regarding crimes and punishments, 352. Narrative of the proceedings against the counts Struensee and Brandt, 354. The courts of justice reformed, 362. Manners of the Danes, 367. Their fondness for nominal distinctions, 368. Titular orders of nobility, 370. Classes of the inhabitants, 373. The chief offices of state bestowed on foreigners, 374. The clergy and lawyers, 376. Wretched slavery of the common people, 379. The country well situated for commerce, 381. Trade checked by the despotism of the government, 381. Cruel treatment of the farmers,

I N D E X.

- mers, 382. Bad state of manufacturers, 384. Cause of this evil, 385. State of the commerce of the several provinces, 387. Trading companies, 389. The currency there, 391. The board of finances, how composed, 393. Whence the crown revenues arise, *ibid.* Taxes, 394. Capitation-tax how proportioned, 395. Taxes on exportation and importation, 396. Excise, *ibid.* Tax on marriages, 397. Stamps, 398. Amount of the revenues, 399. Regular forces and militia, 400. Government of the army, 403. The naval force of the kingdom, 405. The seamen, 406. Marine academy, 407. Admiralty board, 408. Military regulations in time of war, 410. The expences of the present king's late journey how raised, 411. Event of the state lottery at Altona, 412. Causes of the revolutions in this kingdom traced, 413. Consequences of the second marriage of Frederic V. 420. Intrigues of the queen dowager, 421.
- Derbent, is conquered from the Persians by Peter the Great, ii. 197.
- Derpt, the town of, taken by stratagem from the Swedes, by czar Peter, ii. 125.
- De Witt, pensioner, causes of the insurrection against him, i. 137.
- Diet of Poland, the constitution of, explained, ii. 628.
- Dissidents, when this term first occurs in the Polish history, ii. 467. Speech of Tirley, great marshal of the crown, at the coronation of Henry duke of Anjou, 468. The persecution against them renewed, 529. Petition of, to king Stanislas Augustus, 598. Memorial from Russia in their favour, 599. Articles agreed to in their behalf, 601, 603. Their present situation, 644.
- Dolgorowki, the family of, procure the disgrace of prince Mentzikoff, ii. 212. They meditate the undoing of every thing effected by Peter the Great, 214. They are sent into exile by the empress Anne, 216.
- D'Osterman, count, procures Anne duchess dowager of Courland, to be elected empress of Russia, and becomes her prime minister, ii. 216.
- Duels, the present law of Sweden, concerning, i. 628.
- E.
- Echevins, in the city of Amsterdam, their number and office, i. 56.
- Egmont, count, sent to Spain to represent the grievances of the Flemish provinces, 2. 16. Withdraws from the councils of the confederate lords, 19. Is seized by Alva, 21. Is executed at Brussels, 22.
- Elbing, the town of, with the Swedish magazines, taken by the czar Peter, ii. 143.
- Elizabeth, queen of England, gives indirect support to the United Provinces, i. 38. Is offered the sovereignty of them, 39. Sends the earl of Leicester to assist them, 40. Commands him to resign his government, *ibid.* Sends an ambassador to Russia, ii. 39.
- Elizabeth Petrowna, declared empress of Russia, ii. 221. The first acts of her government, *ibid.* Declares her nephew Peter Foedorowitz her successor, 222. Peace of Abo with Sweden, 223. Engages in a war with Prussia, 225. Her death and character, 231.
- Elsenor, the fortress of, built by Eric, i. 220.
- Eric V. king of Denmark, publishes the Birkerett code of laws to check the oppressions of the people by the clergy, i. 204.
- Eric VI. king of Denmark, his legislative acts, i. 206.
- Eric VII. the son of Wratislas duke of Pomerania, his succession to the crowns of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, i. 212. The union of Calmar, 215. Death of queen Margaret, 219. His embarrassments, 220. Renewal of the union of Calmar, 222. Is expelled from Denmark for his tyranny, 224. Loses Sweden and Norway, 225, 540.
- Ethelred, king of England, purchases peace of the piratical Danes, i. 189.
- Eudoxia Lapukin, married to Peter I. czar of Russia, ii. 92. Is divorced and confined in a convent, 99. Causes of this treatment, 171. Fate of her son Alexis, 175, 176. Is set at liberty by her grandson Peter II. 214.
- Europe, the ancient military establishments in, i. 127. How altered, 128.
- Exchange, bills of, how introduced into commerce, i. 105.

I N D E X.

F.

Fermer, the Russian general, his successes in Prussia, ii. 227. Declines farther service, *ibid.* Is restored to his command by Peter III. 234.

Feudal law, when first admitted into Denmark, i. 197.

Fiefs, the origin of, in Poland, ii. 354. Tyranny of the proprietors of, 400.

Finland, is reduced by the Russians under prince Gallitzin, ii. 159.

Fioni, the island of, in Denmark, described, i. 147.

Flanders. See Netherlands.

Fleming, baron, made president of the Swedish college for the reduction of the crown lands, i. 552. His arbitrary acts, 553. Is appointed president of the treasury, 554.

Forester of Flanders, the hereditary office of, appointed, i. 3. This title altered by Charlemagne into that of count, 4.

France, intrigues of the court of, to check the Russian power, i. 592. The inhabitants of, continually emigrating, 643.

Frawstadt, articles agreed on in the senatus consilium held there, ii. 552.

Frederic, duke of Holstein, is offered the crown of Denmark by the Malcontents of Jutland, i. 261. Arrives in Jutland, where he is proclaimed king, 266. Terms of his admission, *ibid.* Favours the reformation, 270.

Frederic III. king of Denmark, reduces the exorbitant power of the nobles, i. 291. The crown made hereditary in his family by a formal act, 295. Translation of this act, 298. Form of government after this revolution, 317. His chamber of rarities how impoverished, 377.

Frederic IV. king of Denmark, delivers the Danish peasants from their slavish condition, i. 335. The full effect of this intention how frustrated, *ibid.* Establishes a marine academy, 407.

Frederic V. king of Denmark, measures taking by him for the reformation of judicial proceedings, i. 362. His codes of laws, 364. His endeavours to improve the manufactures of the country, 384. These intentions frustrated by his favourite minister, 385. Bad consequences of his second marriage, 420.

Frederic, of Hesse Cassel, prince, married to

the princess Ulrica Eleonora of Sweden, i. 576. His accession to the crown of that kingdom, 585. Limitations of his power, 586. Origin of the hat and cap parties, 591. His intrigues with the French court, 593. His death, 594.

Fredericshall, in Norway, is besieged by Charles XII. of Sweden, i. 581. Charles killed there, 582.

Frizeland, the constitution of that province, i. 69.

G.

Gagarin, prince of, governor of Siberia, is beheaded for extortions that oppressed the Russian trade to China, ii. 184.

Gallitzin, prince Basil, his great power under the regent princess Sophia of Russia, ii. 87. Disperses the Strelitz guards in different provinces, 87, 91. His unsuccessful expedition into Crim Tartary, 91. His second expedition into Tartary, 92. Conspires against the life of Peter, and is exiled, 93.

George I. king of Great Britain, is informed of the schemes of the baron de Gortz by the duke of Orleans, ii. 166.

Ghent, the treaty called the pacification of, i. 28.

Glogaw, the town of, defended by Boleslas king of Poland, against the Germans, ii. 366. Siege of by the emperor Henry V. 392.

Gnesna, in Poland, the town of, founded, ii. 350. Is erected into an archbishopric, 361. Is taken by Predisslas duke of Bohemia, who demands the body of St. Adalbert, 372.

Gninski, palatine of Culm, his embassy from John Sobieski, king of Poland, to the grand signior, ii. 507.

Gorman, the first king of Denmark who established any civil regulation, i. 187.

Gortz, baron, minister to Charles XII. of Sweden, his negotiations, i. 578. His treaty with the czar Peter, 580. ii. 164. Is beheaded at Stockholm, 169.

Goths, how converted to Christianity, i. 6. Extended the Christian religion over several parts of Europe, *ibid.* Made a settled maintenance for the clergy by endowments of lands to churches, 7.

Gottenburg, some account of that town, i. 437. East India Company there, 657.

4 Q Govern.

I N D E X.

Government, its influence upon commerce, i. 101.

Granowski, Raphael, great general of Poland, his barbarous behaviour at an assembly of the states to intimidate king Lewis, ii. 435.

Granvelle, cardinal, oppresses the Flemings by inquisitorial authority, i. 15. Is recalled, *ibid.*

Greek church, the monastic societies in, checked by the czar Peter, ii. 192.

Gregory VII. pope, excommunicates and deposes Boleslas king of Poland, ii. 384. Takes his interdict from the kingdom, 385.

Griscza Utrepiou, pretends to be prince Demetrius son of the czar Iwan, ii. 56. Is patronized in Poland, 57. Is proclaimed czar by the army, 59. Combinations against him, 60. Ruins himself by pardoning Basil Suiski, 61. Is killed by Basil's party, 62. Reflections on his case, 63.

Groningen, the constitution of that province, i. 70.

Gustavus the reigning king of Sweden, state of parties at his accession, i. 594. Articles of capitulation sworn to by him, 596. The act establishing his present model of government, 600.

Gustavus Adolphus, his accession to the crown of Sweden, and wars, i. 543. His successes in Germany, and death, 544.

Gustavus Ericson, defeats the archbishop of Upsal, i. 470. Is delivered as a hostage to Christian king of Denmark, and escapes his treachery, 475. Endeavours in vain to excite the Swedes to arms against Christian, 481. Takes refuge in Dalecarlia, 487. Raises an insurrection there, 491. The Danish troops retire before him to Stockholm, 493. Gains Westeras the capital of Westermania, 495. Takes Upsal, 496. Defeats the archbishop, 498. Lays siege to Stockholm, 499. Assembles the states, *ibid.* Is chosen administrator, 500. Is assisted with a fleet from Lubeck on certain stipulations, 501. His successes against the Danish fleet, 502. Is chosen king by an assembly of the states, 505. Stockholm capitulates, 506. His treatment of the Danish ambassador, 508. Sends an envoy to Denmark, 509. Re-

solves to reduce the power of the clergy, 511. His interview and league with Frederic king of Denmark, 512. His motives for deferring his coronation, 513. Explains himself to his chancellor Anderson, 514. Encourages the reformation, 517. Abridges the clerical power, 518. His reply to the remonstrance of the bishops, 520. Seizes part of the ecclesiastical revenues, 523. His speech to the assembly of the states at Westeras, 526. Effectually reduces the power and wealth of the clergy, 530. His prudent conduct on the revolt in Dalecarlia, 532. Professes the Lutheran religion, 534. Marries, 536. His defensive league with France, 537. Procures an act to settle the crown in his family, 538. His testamentary disposition of his dominions, 539. His death and character, 540.

H.

Haarlem, is reduced by the duke d'Alva, and his barbarous use of his victory, i. 27.

Hardy Canute king of Denmark, his treaty with Magnus king of Norway, i. 193.

Harold II. king of Denmark, his peace with the emperor Otho I. and conversion to Christianity, i. 188.

Hedwige, second daughter of Lewis king of Hungary and Poland, is called into Poland to oppose the pretensions of Sigismund marquis of Brandenburg, ii. 435. Marries Jagellon duke of Lithuania, 436. Her death, 437.

Henry duke of Anjou, elected king of Poland, ii. 466. Agrees to the Pacta Conventa, 467. Leaves Poland abruptly, on succeeding to the crown of France, 469.

Henry II. emperor of Germany, his wars with Boleslas king of Poland, ii. 365.

Henry III. emperor, assists Casimir king of Poland against Predislas king of Bohemia, ii. 376.

Henry III. of France, sends his brother the duke d'Alençon to the assistance of the United Provinces, i. 36.

Henry IV. of France, enters into a league with the United Provinces, i. 41. Forms an alliance with the States, 49.

Henry V. emperor, his ineffectual siege of Glogaw, ii. 392.

Henry

I N D E X.

- Henry VII. of England, forms a treaty of commerce with John king of Denmark, i. 238.
- Holberg, baron de, his account of the manners of the Danes, i. 367.
- Holland, its first settlement, i. 4. Account of appointed, *ibid*. Is seized by the prince of Orange, 25. Constitution of that province, 53. State of the trade with Russia, ii. 325. See United Provinces.
- Holstein, the duchy of, in Denmark, described, i. 147. Is acquired by Christian king of Denmark, 232. State of agriculture and trade there, 390.
- Hungarians, ancient, ravage Russia, and impose a tribute on the inhabitants, ii. 17. Ravage Poland, 351. Are driven out by Przemyslas, 352.
- Hungary, is erected into a kingdom by the pope, ii. 362. Andrew the usurper killed, and Bela elected king, 379. Lewis king of, succeeds to the crown of Poland, 432.
- J.
- Jagellon, duke of Lithuania, marries the princess Hedwige created queen of Poland, and receives the Christian religion, ii. 436. Is acknowledged king on the death of his wife, and marries the daughter of the late king Casimir, 437. Refuses the crown of Bohemia, *ibid*. His signal victory over the Teutonic knights, 440. Converts his Lithuanian subjects to Christianity, 441. Is ill-treated by the diet, *ibid*. His death and character, 442.
- Jaroslaw, the surviving son of Wladimir, reduces Lithuania under the Russian government, ii. 21. Publishes the first code of ecclesiastical laws, 22.
- Jatinski, the Polish governor of Czesizin, his brutal treatment of the Cossack Chmielnicki, ii. 486.
- Iceland, description of the country and inhabitants, i. 150. Is settled by a colony of Norwegians, 175. Form of government established there, 176.
- Jeremiah, patriarch of Constantinople, consecrates the primate of Russia an independent patriarch, ii. 49.
- Jermak, a Cossack, made prince of Siberia by the czar Theodore, ii. 49.
- Jews, acquire peculiar privileges in Poland, ii. 427. Capitation-tax on, 492. Are expelled from Kaminiéc, 561. From Warsaw and Lithuania, 562.
- Igor, the son of Ruric, prince of Russia, acquires the province of Kiovia, ii. 16. His method of chusing a wife, 17. Besieges Constantinople, and imposes a tribute on the emperor of the East, 18. His expedition into Asia Minor, *ibid*. Is killed, 19.
- Inquisition, the authority of, introduced into the Netherlands, i. 12. The enforcement of, ordered by Philip II. of Spain, 17.
- Inquisition secret, in Russia, account of the proceedings of that tribunal, ii. 294. Was abolished by Peter III. 295.
- Job, primate of Russia, invested with the dignity of an independent patriarch, ii. 49. Elects Boris Godunow czar, 53.
- John, the son of Christian I. acknowledged king of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, by the diet at Helmstadt, i. 236. Makes a treaty of commerce with Henry VII. king of England, 238. Suppresses a rebellion in Norway, 240.
- John III. king of Sweden, his wars and death, i. 541.
- John Albert king of Poland, his character, ii. 452.
- Iron, the staple commodity of Sweden, i. 651.
- Judgment of God, original of the modes of trial by, i. 183.
- Judicial combat, the origin of, i. 183.
- Juliers, the town of, seized by the States of the United Provinces, i. 50.
- Jutland, code of laws composed and established for, i. 200. Revolt of, against Christian II. of Denmark, 261. The conspirators send him a formal act of deposition, 263.
- Iwan Basiliewitz, czar of Russia, marries the grand-daughter of Emanuel II. emperor of Constantinople, ii. 27. Takes Moscow, and drives the Tartars out of his dominions, 28. Reduces Novogorod, and the kingdom of Kasan, *ibid*.
- Iwan Danielowitz is made grand duke of Russia by the Mogul Tartars, ii. 26.
- Iwan, the son of Basil, is the first prince of Russia, who was proclaimed czar of all the Russias, and who wore a crown, ii. 35. His revenge on the heads of a revolt in his army, 36. Anecdote of his rewarding hospitality

I N D E X.

- hospitality and punishing the violators of it, 37. Recovers Kafan and Astracan from the Tartars, 38. His reception of the ambassador from queen Elizabeth, 39. Is affronted by the Poles, 40. His treatment of Livonia, 41, 42. Account of the unhappy death of his son, 43. His death and character, 45. His code of laws, *ibid.*
- Iwan, brother of the czar Peter, why set aside from succeeding to the crown of Russia, ii. 84. Is associated with Peter and Sophia, 86. Is married to the daughter of Soltikoff, 87. Dies, 99.
- Iwan, infant son to the princess of Brunswic, is declared successor to the Russian empire by the empress Anne, ii. 219. The whole power of government enjoyed by his guardian Biron, *ibid.* He and his parents arrested and imprisoned by Elizabeth Petrowna, who mounts the throne, 221. Endures a long imprisonment in the castle of Schlussembourg, 268. His death, 269. Reflections on this event, *ibid.*
- K.
- Kamtskatka, some description of that country, ii. 13, 276.
- Kasan, the kingdom of, reduced to the Russian dominion by Iwan Basiliewitz, ii. 28. The Russian governor of, outwits the Kan of the Tartars, 34.
- Kettler, Godhard, grand master of the Teutonic order, his treaty with the king of Poland, ii. 464. Receives investiture of the duchy of Courland, 470. His death, 473.
- King, the mutual obligations between him and his subjects, ii. 438.
- Kio, the metropolis of the Ukraine, great antiquity of, ii. 7.
- Kolo, the nature of that military council in Poland explained, ii. 563.
- Koningsburg in Prussia, taken by the Russian general Fermer, ii. 227.
- Kovanski, a Russian noble, instigates a revolt of the Strelitz guards against the princess Sophia and her favourite Gallitzin, ii. 89. Is put to death by Sophia, 90.
- Kouli Kan, meditates hostilities against Russia, but consents to a peace, ii. 223.
- L.
- Ladoga, the canal and town of, founded, ii. 182.
- Laland, and Falster, the islands of, in Denmark, described, i. 147.
- Lapland, Danish, description of the country and inhabitants, i. 149. Russian, some account of, ii. 5.
- Leck, the Sclavonian chief, founds the town of Gnesna in Poland, ii. 350.
- Lefort, a Swiss officer in the Russian service, acquires the confidence of the young czar Peter, ii. 88. Forms a company of cadets for the establishment of military discipline, 95. Commands the fleet at the siege of Asoph, 100. Attends the czar in his travels, 104. Dies, 110.
- Leicester, earl of, sent over from England, and made governor of the United Provinces, i. 40. Is ordered by Elizabeth to resign his government, *ibid.*
- Lefzek, his fraudulent scheme to gain the kingdom of Poland, ii. 353. Is killed for his artifice, *ibid.*
- Lefzko II. how he attained the kingdom of Poland, ii. 353. His character, 354.
- Lefzko III. king of Poland, the principal actions of his reign, ii. 354. Introduces siefs into that country, *ibid.*
- Lefzko, the son of Casimir, elected duke of Poland, ii. 404. The possession disputed with him by Miecislaw, the deposed duke, 405. His memorable victory over the Russians, 407. Is assassinated, 408. His character, *ibid.*
- Lefzko, grandson of Conrad duke of Mazovia, is named by Boleslas his successor in the dukedom of Poland, ii. 412. His wars with the Russians, Tartars, and Lithuanians, 414. His death, and character of his government, 415.
- Lewis king of Hungary, is nominated to succeed to the crown of Poland, ii. 426. Disgusts the Poles and returns to Hungary, 432. Cedes the province of Silesia to Sigismund marquis of Brandenburg, *ibid.* His compromise with the Poles, the origin of the subsequent aristocratical government, 433. His disadvantageous peace with the Lithuanians, 434. He dismembers some provinces bordering on Hungary, *ibid.* His treatment for this act, by Granowski great general of the crown, 435.
- Acknow-

I N D E X.

- Acknowledges Sigismund as his successor in Poland, and sends him to govern that nation in his name, *ibid.* Dies, *ibid.*
- Leyden, siege of, by Requesenes, i. 27.
- Lissa, the town of, in Poland, destroyed by the Russians, ii. 526.
- Lithuania, some account of that province, ii. 348. Is erected into a kingdom by the pope, 412. Peace concluded with, by Lewis king of Hungary and Poland, 434. Jagellon, duke of, marries the princess Hedwige, and is converted to the Christian religion, 436. The natives converted, 441. Casimir, duke of, elected king of Poland, 447. Revolt of, 449. Alexander, duke of, elected king of Poland, 454. Union of, with Poland, *ibid.* Final settlement of this union, 465. Polock reduced by Stephen Battori, 472. Confederacy of, under prince Radzivil, 611.
- Livonia, a code of laws formed for, by Eric VI. king of Denmark, i. 206. Account of that province, ii. 2. Is reduced to the Russian empire by the grand duke Jaroslaw, 21. Is granted to Magnus duke of Holstein, 41. The inhabitants burn the town of Venda for fear of the czar Iwan, 42. Is ravaged by the czar Peter's forces, 119. Destruction of the town of Mariembourg, 121. Riga taken by prince Mentzikoff, 144. Is wholly reduced by the czar Peter, 145. Is ceded to Russia, 194. Is reduced under the dominion of the crown of Poland, 464. Is distressed by the wars between the Swedes and the Poles, 476.
- Low Countries. See Netherlands.
- Lubeck, stipulations made by the republic of, for sending a fleet to the assistance of Gustavus Ericson, i. 501.
- Lubomirski, great general of the crown of Poland, attempts to exalt himself by causing a revolution of the government, ii. 494.
- Luther, Martin, his doctrines received in the Netherlands, i. 12.
- M.
- Maase, the difficulty of navigating that channel, i. 118.
- Magnus king of Norway, his treaty with Hardy Canute king of Denmark, i. 193.
- Magnus, John, elected archbishop of Upsal, i. 512. Remonstrates to Gustavus Ericson, in the name of the bishops, on his conduct towards the clergy, 520. Advises the making a translation of the scriptures, 521. His temporalities seized by the king, 524.
- Magnus Smeck, king of Sweden, attempts to render himself absolute, and is expelled, i. 448.
- Mahomet IV. sultan, abusive letters between him and the czar Alexis of Russia, ii. 81.
- Malachowski, count, his representation of the state of Poland at the opening of the diet, ii. 576. Checks the outrageous conduct of the members, 577. Breaks up the diet met for the election of a king, as being awed by Russian troops. 591.
- Margaret queen of Norway, admitted to succeed to the crown of Denmark, i. 211. Acquires the sovereignty of Sweden, 213. Procures the union of the three crowns for Eric, 214. Her character, 219. Her politic conduct to secure her authority in Sweden, 454. Attaches the clergy to her by liberality to them, 455.
- Mariembourg in Livonia, the town of, taken by the czar Peter, and destroyed, ii. 122.
- Marius, Caius, the Roman consul, his prudent conduct in opposing the Cimbri, i. 155. His great victory over the Teutones, 157. Defeats the Cimbri, 158.
- Marke, count de la, takes the Briel, and declares against the tyranny of the Spanish government in the Netherlands, i. 25.
- Masos, palatine of Masovia, his revolt against Casimir king of Poland, ii. 375. Is put to death by his Prussian allies, 376.
- Matei, schah, his treaty with John Albert king of Poland, ii. 453. Is deserted by the army he brought to the assistance of Poland, 454. Is arrested, *ibid.* His remonstrance to the king of Poland, 455. The clergy oppose the setting him at liberty, 456.
- Matthias, archduke, invited to be governor general of the Netherlands, i. 33. His authority not established, 34.
- Matilda, queen of Denmark, confined in the castle of Cronenburg, i. 355. Accusation laid against her, 356. The manner in which Struensee was forced into a confession to her prejudice, 357, 359. The arts

I N D E X.

- arts practised against her by the queen dowager, 422.
- Maurice, prince, succeeds his father in his authority in the United Provinces of the Low Countries, i. 37. Is chosen governor, 41. Defeats the archduke Albert, 44. Takes Sluyce and Grave, 45. Barneveldt's cabals, 136.
- Maximilian, emperor of Germany, his treaty of alliance with the czar Basil, ii. 31.
- Mazeppa, hetman of the Cossacks, his offer to Charles XII. of Sweden, ii. 133. His men refuse to fulfil his engagements, 135. His magazines taken, and himself deposed by the czar Peter, *ibid.*
- Mentzikoff, an itinerant tart-seller, becomes the favourite of the czar Peter, ii. 99. Persuades Peter to part with his czarina Eudocia, *ibid.* Is made governor of Narva, 126. Defeats Maderfeld the Swedish general in Poland, 129. His engagements with Lewenhaupt, 134. Battle of Pultawa, 137. Takes Riga, 144. Secures the sovereignty to Catherine on the death of Peter, 201. Protects her against a conspiracy, 207. Is plundered and sent captive into Siberia on the death of Catherine, 212. His character, 213.
- Mercenary troops, whether proper to be depended on for the defence of a country, i. 129.
- Michael Romanow, is elected czar of Russia, ii. 73. Signs a capitulation, *ibid.* Concludes a peace with Gustavus Adolphus king of Sweden, 74. His father's exhortation to him, 75. His death, 77.
- Miecislaw, succeeds his father Ziemomislas as duke of Poland, ii. 359. Marries the princess Dambrowcka, and is converted to Christianity, *ibid.* Establishes the Christian religion in his kingdom, 361. His wars with the Saxons and Bohemians, 362.
- Miecislaw II. king of Poland, his indolent disposition, ii. 369. Assembles all his military vassals, *ibid.* His wars in Moravia and Pomerania, 370. His death, *ibid.*
- Miecislaw, the third son of Boleslas duke of Poland, the provinces left to him by his Father, ii. 395. Is elected duke of Poland on the death of his elder brother, 400. Is deposed for his tyranny, *ibid.*
- His contests with Leszko for the government, 405. His death and character, 406.
- Miedzyrzecz, the castle of, taken by prince Boleslas, ii. 387.
- Mines, the produce of, only articles of commerce, i. 98.
- Mithridates, opposes Pompey with an army of Scythians, i. 160.
- Mittau, the citadel of, taken by the czar Peter, ii. 128. Prince Charles of Saxony driven out of, by the Russians, 583.
- Mogol Tartars, conquer the Russian empire under Bathow Kan, ii. 23. Their mode of governing the country, 24. Are driven out of the Russian dominions by Iwan Basiliewitz, 28.
- Moltki, count, public accusations against, i. 421. Is protected by the queen dowager of Denmark, 422. Assists in the disgrace of the young queen, and ruin of Brandt and Struensee, 424.
- Monarchies, the oppression and tyranny of, the production of republics, i. 103.
- Money, its proper use in commerce, i. 96.
- Monopolies prejudicial to the general commerce of a state, i. 93.
- Moravia, reduced to a province under the kingdom of Poland, ii. 364. Is ravaged by the Bohemians, 369. Is laid waste by Uladislas king of Poland, 387.
- Morosow, prince Boris Iwanowitz, governor of the young czar Alexis, becomes his minister, ii. 77. His tyranny, 78. Tumult against him appeased by the czar, 79.
- Morski, Casimir, copy of his protest against the proceedings of the Polish diet, ii. 564. Remarks on it, 566.
- Moscow, description of that city, ii. 5. The territory of, becomes an independent principality, 23. The city of, regarded as the capital of all the Russias, *ibid.* The Kremelin or citadel of, built, 25. Is taken from the Tartars from Iwan Basiliewitz, 27. Is seized by Sigismond king of Poland, 68. Is burnt, and numbers of the inhabitants massacred by the Poles, 71. Peter rebuilds the houses with stone, 120. A printing office established there, 122. Peter's triumphal entry there after the victory at Pultawa, 142.
- Munich, marshal, his successes against the Turks, ii. 218. Arrests Biron duke of Cour-

I N D E X.

Courland, 220. Is exiled into Siberia, 221. Is recalled, 233.

N.

Namur, the castle of, seized by Don John of Austria, i. 29.

Narva, battle of, between Charles XII. of Sweden, and the czar Peter, i. 562. Secret cause of the defeat of the czar, ii. 117.

Netherlands, wasted by inundation of Scythians passing through to the southern parts of Europe, i. 3. Formed into a civil government by the Franks, under an officer called the Forester of Flanders, *ibid.* The title of forester altered by Charlemagne to that of count, 4. The nature of the government under the counts, 5. The three orders constituting the States, 6. The causes for which they were assembled, 8. This assembly the basis of their liberty, *ibid.* Revenues of their princes, *ibid.* Their military forces, 9. Union of the seventeen provinces under Philip of Burgundy, *ibid.* Are kindly treated by the emperor Charles V. 10. All confidence destroyed between them and Philip II. of Spain, 11. Receive the doctrines of the reformation, 12. Commotions there, which induce Philip to recall his troops to pacify them, 13. New bishoprics established, 14. French Calvinists take refuge there, *ibid.* Cardinal Granvelle recalled for his oppressive conduct, 15. Conference at Bayonne, 16. Orders issued by Philip, for the capital punishment of heretics, 17. Confederacy of the lords against the authority of the inquisition, 17. The date of the general revolt of, 18. The prince of Orange retires to Germany, 19. Arrival of the duke d'Alva, 20. The duchess of Parma resigns her authority, and is succeeded by Alva, 21. Who exerts his authority with rigor, *ibid.* The prince of Orange repulsed by Alva, who extorts fresh taxes, 23. Friezeland, Holland, and Zealand, seized by the prince of Orange, 25. Naerden and Harlem taken and inhumanly treated by Alva, 26. Alva recalled and succeeded by Requesenes, 27. Don John of Austria appointed governor, *ibid.* Pacification of Ghent, 28. The castle of Namur seized by Don John of Austria, 29. The prince of Orange ap-

pointed protector of Brabant, *ibid.* Death of Don John of Austria, and appointment of the duke of Parma as his successor, 30. Union of Utrecht, *ibid.* The archduke Matthias invited to be governor-general of, 33. The duke d'Alençon invited to be governor, 36. The prince of Orange assassinated, *ibid.* Prince Maurice succeeds to his father's authority, 37. The archduke Albert sent as governor from Spain with a large army, 42. Albert defeated by prince Maurice, 44. A twelve years truce concluded between Albert and the United Provinces, 49. A peace concluded with them, 51. See United Provinces.

Neustadt, peace of, between Russia and Sweden, ii. 194.

Newport, battle of, between Maurice prince of Orange, and the archduke Albert, i. 44.

Nogoy, Andrew, pretends himself to be the czar Demetrius, ii. 65. Raises an army, 66. Is acknowledged by Griscza's widow, *ibid.*

Nonces, sent from the Palatinates of Poland to the diet, ii. 452.

Normandy, a colony of Danes settled there, i. 187.

Normans, the origin of, pointed out, i. 440.

Northern nations, their policy far from that barbarity attributed to them by the Romans, i. 6.

Norway, the kingdom of, described, i. 148. Is conquered by Woden, whose son Soemungue is made king, 164. A colony of refugees from, settled in Iceland, 175. Treaty between Magnus king of, and Hardy Canute king of Denmark, 193. Margaret queen of, succeeds to the crown of Denmark, 211. Union of Calmar, 215, 222. Eric expelled, 224. Christian king of Denmark chosen king, 231. A rebellion against John, reduced by prince Christian, 240. Its independency destroyed, 288. Tenure of land there, 339. Character of the natives, 378. The exports of that country, 387. State of commerce there, 390. Established militia of, 402. Great part of the revenues of mortgaged to baron de Schimmelman, 411. Is attacked by Charles XII. 581.

Novo-

I N D E X.

Novogorod, in Russia, description of that province, ii. 7. Is reduced, after a seven years siege, by Iwan Basiliewitz, 28.

O.

Obreskoff, the Russian minister at Constantinople, declaration of the grand vizier to him on the affairs of Poland, ii. 284. Is arrested, 285.

Oginski, palatine of Troki, disturbances in the Polish diet on his appointment to be great chancellor of Lithuania, ii. 510.

Oldenburg, count of, undertakes the restoration of Christian II. king of Denmark, i. 276. Is taken prisoner, 281.

Olesnicki, Sbignee, a young Pole, saves the life of king Jagellon in battle, ii. 441. Is made bishop of Cracow, *ibid.* His address to secure the election of prince Uladislas to the crown, 443. Is elected a cardinal, 448.

Olgha, a young woman of Pleskow, how she became the wife of Igor prince of Russia, ii. 17. Revenges her husband's death on the Drewlians, 19. Is converted to Christianity, and introduces this religion into Russia, *ibid.*

Orange, William prince of, governor of Holland and Zealand, endeavours to suppress tumults in the Netherlands, i. 19. Retires to Germany, *ibid.* Is proclaimed a traitor, and levies forces, 22. Is repulsed by Alva, and forced to disband them, 23. Takes the Briel, 24. Seizes Friesland, Holland, and Zealand, 25. Pacification of Ghent, 28. Is appointed protector of Brabant, 29. Signs the Union of Utrecht, 33. His character, 34. Is assassinated, 36.

Ordeal by fire and water, the origin of, i. 183.

Orembourg, province of, in Russia, some account of, ii. 10.

Orleans, duke of, discovers the intrigues of baron de Gortz to the king of Great Britain, ii. 166.

Osman, sultan, his war with Sigismund king of Poland, and treaty between them, ii. 480.

Ostend, taken after three years siege by the archduke Albert, i. 45.

Ostiaks, some account of that people, ii. 12.

Otho I. emperor, grants peace to Harold II.

king of Denmark on condition of his receiving the Christian religion, i. 188.

Otho, emperor, confers the title of king on Boleslas duke of Bohemia, ii. 364.

Otho Crumpin defeats Steno administrator of Sweden, i. 476. Procures Christian to be acknowledged king, 479.

Otto, bishop of Bamberg, converts the inhabitants of Pomerania to Christianity, ii. 394.

P.

Pacta Conventa of the crown of Poland, first formed, ii. 467. Its obligation, 627.

Palatines of Poland, their military obligations, ii. 369. Force queen Richsa with her son Casimir to fly the country, 371.

Recal Casimir, 374. Revolt of Masos palatine of Masovia, 375. Their situation under Boleslas, 395. Their independent spirit the cause of all the troubles in the kingdom, 401. The Pacta Conventa, 467.

Papirius Carbo, consul, is sent from Rome to oppose the irruption of the Cimbri, i. 153.

Paris, massacre of the protestants there, i. 17.

Parma, duchess of, appointed governess of the Netherlands, i. 12. Is petitioned to abolish the authority of the inquisition, 18. Date of the general revolt of the Netherlands, *ibid.* Remonstrates against the sending the duke d'Alva thither, 20. Resigns her authority, 21.

Parma, duke of, succeeds Don John of Austria as governor of the Netherlands, i. 30. His prudent conduct, 39. His progress interrupted by expeditions into France, 41. Dies, 42.

Patkul, count, his unhappy fate, ii. 130.

Pensioner of Amsterdam, his office, i. 56.

Peter I. is declared by his brother the czar Theodore to be his successor, ii. 84. His sister Sophia excites the Strelitz guards to revolt against him, 85. His brother Iwan and sister Sophia associated with him in the government, 86. Marries Eudocia against his sister's consent, 92. Discovers a conspiracy against his life, 93. Forms the scheme of civilizing his Russian subjects, 95. Invites foreign artizans to settle in his dominions, *ibid.* Engages with the emperor Leopold in a war against the Turks,

I N D E X.

Turks, 96. Parts with his wife Eudocia, 99. Takes Asoph, 100. Raises a fleet, 101. Enters Moscow in triumph, 102. Settles his government, and travels in the train of an embassy, 104. Works as a ship-builder at Amsterdam, 105. Sends home a great number of mechanics, 106. Goes over to England, *ibid.* Works at all trades, 107. Introduces tobacco into Russia, *ibid.* Visits the emperor Leopold at Vienna, 108. Returns to Moscow and breaks the Strelitz guards who had revolted, 109. Reforms his army, 110. Reforms all the departments of his government, *ibid.* Abolishes the office of patriarch, 111. Assumes the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs, *ibid.* Restrains the monasteries, 112. Reforms the manners of his people, *ibid.* Has an interview with Augustus king of Poland relative to opening a communication with the Baltic, 115. Enters into an alliance with Frederick IV. of Denmark against Charles XII. of Sweden, *ibid.* Besieges Narva, 116. Cause of the defeat of his army there, 117. His plan of conduct against Charles, 118. Leagues with the king of Poland against Charles, *ibid.* Builds a fleet on the lakes Peypus and Ladoga, 119. Fortifies Archangel, 120. Gains advantages over the Swedes, 121. Takes Mariembourg, 122. Marries Catherine, one of the captives, *ibid.* Establishes a printing office at Moscow, *ibid.* Undertakes to build the town of Petersburg, 123. His stratagem to get possession of Derpt, 125. Takes the citadel of Mittau, 128. Advantages gained over him by Charles, 131, 132. Punishes the treachery of the Cossack Mazeppa, 135. Battle of Pultawa, 137. Renews his alliance with Augustus on his relinquishing Livonia, 141. Returns in triumph to Moscow, 142. Reduces Elbing, and takes the Swedish magazines, 143. Takes Riga, 144. Reduces all Livonia, 145. Engages in a war with the Turks, 146. Is surrounded by the Turkish army, 151. His distress, 152. The empress Catherine negotiates a peace for his deliverance, 153. Goes to the assistance of the king of Denmark, 158. Augments his marine, 159. Destroys the Swedish fleet at the mouth of the Bothnic Gulph, 160. His remarks on the improved state of his country, *ibid.*

His law relating to inheritance, 161. Review of his situation, 162. Establishes a marine academy at Petersburg, and founds the palace of Petershoff, *ibid.* Disgust between him and the king of Denmark, 164. Engages in the schemes of baron de Gortz the Swedish minister, 165. Visits France, 167. Negotiates with de Gortz, *ibid.* His schemes frustrated by the death of Charles XII. 169. His endeavours to reform the character of his son Alexis, 172. His letter to Alexis, *ibid.* A second letter to him, 173. A third letter to him, 174. Obliges him to make a formal renunciation of his right of succession, 175. Condemns his son to die, 176. Reflections on his conduct towards Alexis, 179. His civil regulations, 180. His zeal to introduce manufactures, 181. His inland navigations, and other public works, 182. His commercial treaty with the emperor of China, 185. Opens the commerce of the Baltic, *ibid.* His endeavours to reform the Russian laws, 186. His new code, 188. Remark on his plans of reformation, 189. His alterations in ecclesiastical government, 190. His advantageous peace with Sweden, 194. Conquers Derbent in Armenia, 197. Is declared to be Antichrist by some of his clergy, 198. Crowns his empress Catherine, 199. His death, 201. His character, 202. Peter Alexiowitz, declared successor to the crown of Russia, ii. 207. His accession, 212. Disgrace of prince Mentzikoff, *ibid.* Death of Peter, 215. Peter Foedorowitz, takes the title of great duke of Russia, and is declared heir to the crown, ii. 222. Marries Catherine Alexiowna of Anhalt Zerbst, 224. Is declared reigning duke of Holstein Gottorp, *ibid.* His son Paul Petrowitz born, 225. Secretly obstructs the operations of the war against Prussia, 227. Succeeds to the crown by the death of the empress Elizabeth, 232. The first acts of his reign, 232. His declaration to his allies, 234. His plan for a general peace, 235. His scheme for altering the constitution of Poland, 237. His commercial arrangements, 239. His tribunal of police, 240. Attempts to secularize ecclesiastical property, 241. Disgusts his army, 242. Meditates a divorce from his empress, 243.

I N D E X.

243. Catherine declared sole empress, 245. Is arrested, 246. His formal renunciation of the government, *ibid.* 250. His suspicious death, 251. His character, 252, 256, 342.
- Petersbourg, the town of, founded, ii. 123. Is attempted to be destroyed by the Swedes, 124, 125, 126. Marine academy established there, 162. Houses there to be built only of brick or stone, 180. Great resort of shipping to, 185. The academy of sciences founded there, 199. State of exports and imports there, 323.
- Petershoff, the palace of, founded, ii. 162.
- Petrikaw, tumult of the Polish nobles there, ii. 558. Their outrages suspended by the death of count Potocki, 560.
- Philip of Burgundy, unites the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries, i. 9.
- Philip II. of Spain, how he lost the confidence of his Flemish subjects, i. 11. Appoints the duchess of Parma governess of the Netherlands, 12. Recals his troops to pacify the Flemings, 13. Establishes new bishoprics there, 14. Recals cardinal Granvelle, 15. Conference of Bayonne, 16. Date of the general revolt of the Netherlands, 18. Sends the duke d'Alva thither, 20. Recals Alva for his brutal severity, 27. Bestows the government of the Netherlands on Don John of Austria, *ibid.* Procures the assassination of the prince of Orange, 36. Acquires possession of Portugal, 38. His various schemes, *ibid.* Causes that weakened his power in the Low Countries, 41. Sends the archduke Albert as governor with a large army, 42. His scheme in this appointment, 43. Dies, 45.
- Piaſt, an inhabitant of Kruswick, how he obtained the crown of Poland, ii. 356. His excellent character, 357.
- Poland, the antient extent of, ii. 345. The four grand districts of, 346. The principal cities of, 347. Account of the antient inhabitants of, from Tacitus, 349. Leck, the antient Sclavonian king, 350. Cracus elected king, *ibid.* His daughter Vanda elected, 351. Is ravaged by the Hungarians, *ibid.* Delivered from them by Przemyſlas, 352. He is elected duke, *ibid.* The people propose the kingdom as a prize to the best racer, 353. Leszko II. chosen duke, *ibid.* Leszko III. 354.
- Popiel, *ibid.* Origin of fiefs there, *ibid.* Popiel II. poisons his uncles, 355. Piaſt chosen duke, 357. His excellent character, *ibid.* Is succeeded by his son Ziemovit, who teaches his subjects laws and military discipline, 358. Character of Ziemomilas, *ibid.* And of his son Miecislaw, 359. He marries the princess Dambroweka, and is converted to Christianity, *ibid.* Account of the antient religion of the country, 360. The nature of the Christianity then established there, 361. Boleslas, his wife government, 363. Usurpations of the Romish clergy, *ibid.* The title of king conferred on Boleslas by the emperor Otho, 364. Bohemia reduced to a province, *ibid.* Wars between the emperor Henry II. and Boleslas, 365. His war with Russia, *ibid.* Death of Boleslas, 368. Character of his son Miecislaw, *ibid.* Miecislaw assembles all his military vassals, 369. His wars in Moravia and Pomerania, 370. Queen Richſa left regent, and guardian of her son prince Casimir, *ibid.* Richſa forced to fly the kingdom, 371. The kingdom desolated by the Palatines, *ibid.* Casimir recalled, 373. The first acts of his reign, 375. Revolt of Masos, *ibid.* His concessions to the clergy, 377. Accession of Boleslas, and his Bohemian wars, 378. Prussia reduced, 379. Boleslas's expedition to Russia, 381. Conduct of the Polish women during the absence of their husbands, *ibid.* Brutal behaviour of Boleslas on his return, 383. He is excommunicated and flies, 384. Uladislas elected king, *ibid.* His wars in Prussia, Pomerania, and Moravia, 386. Rebellion of the princes Sbignee and Boleslas, 388. Boleslas declared duke, on the death of Uladislas, 390. His wars against the emperor Henry V. and the Bohemians, 392. Death and character of Boleslas, 394. Divides the kingdom into four governments among his sons, *ibid.* Uladislas wanting to dispossess his brothers, is expelled, 396. Boleslas his brother received as duke of Poland, *ibid.* Silesia ceded to Uladislas, 398. Miecislaw elected, and deposed for his tyranny, 400. Casimir elected, *ibid.* He relieves the farmers from the obligation of entertaining the proprietors of fiefs on their journeys, 401. Leszko elected duke, *ibid.*
- Scan.

I N D E X.

Scandalous lives of the clergy, 405. Miecislaw, the deposed duke, contests the possession with Leszko, *ibid.* Leszko assassinated, 408. Conrad, duke of Mazovia, assumes the regency, *ibid.* His treaty with the Teutonic knights for assistance against the Prussians, 409. Boleslas, the son of Leszko, driven out of his dominions by the Tartars, 410. The confusion and distress of the nation, 411. Wars of Leszko with the Russians, Tartars, and Lithuanians, 414. King Przemyſlas assassinated, 416. Uladislas Loketek chosen king, but deposed for debauchery and cruelty, 417. He is restored and reformed, 418. Pomerania ceded to the Teutonic knights by Casimir, 426. Peculiar privileges granted to the Jews, 427. Casimir reforms the judicial proceedings of his courts, 428. Protects the farmers from oppression, 429. His death and character, 431. Accession of Lewis king of Hungary to the throne of, *ibid.* Origin of the present aristocracy in this kingdom, 433. Lewis dismembers some provinces bordering on Hungary, 434. Sigismund, marquis of Brandenburg, acknowledged successor to the throne, 435. Hedwige, Lewis's daughter, called in to oppose the pretensions of Sigismund, *ibid.* Hedwige married to Jagellon duke of Lithuania, 436. Jagellon acknowledged king on his wife's death, 437. His great victory over the Teutonic knights, 440. Death and character of Jagellon, 442. His son Uladislas elected by the address of the bishop of Cracow, 443. He is killed in battle by the Turks, 446. Accession of Casimir duke of Lithuania, 447. His contests with the Poles for the independency of Lithuania, *ibid.* Spirited remonstrance to Casimir in the diet at Petrikow, 449. Treaty of peace with the Teutonic knights, 450. The expences of the war maintained against them, 451. New regulation of the diet, 452. Death and character of Casimir, *ibid.* John Albert, his principal actions and character, 453. Motives for choosing Alexander, duke of Lithuania, king, 454. Lithuania united to the kingdom of, *ibid.* Great victory gained by general Glinſki over the Tartars, 456. Death and character of Alexander, 457. Treaty between Sigismund and Albert of

Brandenbourg, grand master of the Teutonic order, 458. The diet debate against the secret marriage of Sigismund Augustus, 462. Treaties with the grand master of the Teutonic order, 464. Albert Tredenti receives investiture of the duchy of Prussia from Sigismund, 465. Henry duke of Anjou elected king, 466. The *Pacta conventa* first formed, 467. Speech of Tirley, great marshal of the crown, at the coronation of Henry duke of Anjou, 468. Henry abandons the kingdom on succeeding to the crown of France, 469. Stephen Battori elected king, 470. The city of Dantzic refusing to acknowledge him, is reduced by Mark Sobieski, *ibid.* Stephen's internal government, 471. Sigismund, prince of Sweden, elected, *ibid.* The right of inheritance decided by *primogeniture*, 472. War between the Cossacks and the Tartars, *ibid.* Revenues settled to support the dignity of the crown, 473. War and treaty with sultan Osman, 480. Death and character of Sigismund, 481. His son Uladislas elected king, 482. War with the Cossacks, 484. Conference at Thorn for the accommodation of religious differences, *ibid.* Treaty with the Venetians, 485. Death and character of Uladislas, *ibid.* The country ravaged by the Cossacks, 487. John Casimir elected king 488. Treaty of Welaw with the elector of Brandenburg, 490. Treaty of Olivia with Russia, 492. The nature of a confederacy of the army explained, 493. Power of the four great officers of the crown, *ibid.* Ambitious attempts of Lubomirski, 494. First rise of John Sobieski, *ibid.* His great victory over the Tartars and Cossacks, 495. John Casimir resigns the crown, 496. Divided state of the kingdom, 498. Michael Wiecknowiecki elected king, 499. John Sobieski's great successes against the Cossacks, *ibid.* Confederacies of the king, and of John Sobieski, 501. Michael's inglorious treaty with the Turks, 502. This treaty annulled by the diet, at the persuasion of John Sobieski, 503. Death of Michael, and victory of John Sobieski over the Turks, 504. Number of competitors for the crown, *ibid.* John Sobieski elected king, 505. He defeats the Turks again, 506. Peace concluded with them, 507. Am-
bassador

I N D E X.

bassador sent to Constantinople, *ibid.* Proceedings of the diet at Grodno, 508, 510. Outrages committed at Warsaw by the servants of the Polish and Lithuanian members of the diet, 515. Death and character of John Sobieski, 517. Augustus elector of Saxony, chosen king, 518. His alliance with Russia and Denmark against Sweden, 519. Augustus is defeated by Charles XII. of Sweden, 521. Augustus deposed, 522. Stanislas Leczinski elected king by Charles, 523. Coronation of Stanislas, 524. The kingdom ravaged by the Russians, 526. Augustus restored by the battle of Pultawa, 527. The army new modelled by the diet, 528. The persecution of the Dissidents revived, 529. Feud between prince Czartoriski and prince Wiesnowiski, 531. Disturbances excited by the Jesuits at Thorn, against the Lutheran college, 532. Death and character of Augustus, 536. His son elected, *ibid.* Fray between the retinue of the grand treasurer, and that of count Bruhl, 540. A confederacy formed and propositions sent to Constantinople, 541. Speech of the great chancellor to the diet, 543. A senatus consilium at Frawstadt, 552. Diet at Grodno, 554. The Prussian court corrupts members of the diet to disturb their proceedings and procure its dissolution, *ibid.* Declaration of the empress of Russia to the king and the republic, 555. The diet at Warsaw obstructed and dissolved by Prussian machinations, 556. Tumult of the nobles at Petrikaw, 558. Their outrages suspended by the death of count Potocki, 560. Count Rzewski elected great marshal of the crown, *ibid.* Another diet frustrated by the Prussian party, *ibid.* The Jews expelled in several parts of the kingdom, 561. Disturbances at Dantzic, 562. Copy of the protest of Casimir Morski, against the proceedings of the diet, 564. Zamosecki, count, his violent proceedings to recover a private right, 566. Difference between the king and the pope, 567. Outrages committed in the diet, 570. Another abortive diet, 573. Prince Sulhowski carried off by Russian troops, *ibid.* Proceedings of the diet stopped on account of count Bruhl, 577. Contest relating to the duchy of Courland, 579. Death of king Augustus, 584. De-

bates of the senate relative to a new election, 587. The empress of Russia and king of Prussia formally disclaim all pretensions to the provinces of, 588. Assurances of friendship from other powers, 589. Letter from the grand vizier to the prince primate, *ibid.* The diet awed by Russian troops, 591. The diet broke up by marshal Malachowski, 592. Prince Czartorinski chosen marshal by the Russian party, *ibid.* State of parties, *ibid.* Count Poniatowski elected king, 594. He establishes an uniformity of weights and measures, 596. Regulations proposed by the clergy, 597. Petition of the Dissidents to the king, 598. Memorial from Russia in behalf of the Dissidents, 599. Articles agreed to in their favour, 601. Confederacies formed, 605. Manifesto of the confederacy at Thorn, 606. Some members of the diet seized by the Russian minister, Repnin, 612. Articles agreed to, in favour of the Dissidents, 613. They are ratified by the diet, 616. Other regulations formed for the peace of the kingdom, *ibid.* New confederacies start up, 618. Polish Prussia seized by the Prussians, and Cracow with part of Great Poland by the Austrians, 619. Attempts made to carry off and murder the king by the confederates of Bar, 621. Dismemberment of the kingdom by the empress queen of Hungary, the king of Prussia, and the empress of Russia, 622. The diet forced to cede the provinces ravished from the kingdom, 623. The present state and form of the government of, 624. The power of the king, 627. The nobles, *ibid.* The legislative authority, 628. The diets, *ibid.* The nature of those associations termed confederacies, 631. Civil laws, *ibid.* Slavery of the common people, 633. Church government, 635. Criminal laws, 636. Manners and customs of the Poles, 637. Classes of the inhabitants, 639. The farmers, *ibid.* The clergy, 640. Citizens and merchants, 641. The poor, 642. The women, 643. Commerce and manufactures, 645. Number of inhabitants, 646. Agriculture, 649. Revenues for the support of government, 651. The military establishment, 652. Military discipline, 653. Principal causes of the turbulence of the government, 655. Pome-

I N D E X.

Pomerania, the Christian religion preached there by Otho bishop of Bamberg, ii. 394. Is seized by the Teutonic knights, 420. Is ceded to them by Casimir king of Poland, 426.

Poniatowski Stanislas Augustus, count, protests against the proceedings of the Polish diet, on account of the presence of count Bruhl, ii. 577. Russian troops introduced to influence his election to the crown, 591. Is elected king, 594. His first acts of government, 595. Reduces weights and measures to a uniform standard, 596. Convoques a diet for the settlement of the nation, 611. Articles agreed on in relation to the Dissidents, 614. Other points determined for the peace of the kingdom, 616. New confederacies formed, 618. Distraction of affairs, 619. Different parts of his kingdom seized by the Prussians and Austrians, *ibid.* Attempts made to carry him off, and murder him, by the confederacy of Bar, 621. Dismemberment of his kingdom, 622.

Popiel I. king of Poland, his natural brothers hold fiefs from him, ii. 354. His character, 355.

Popiel II. king of Poland, is left under the guardianship of his uncles, whom he poisons, ii. 355. His character, 356.

Precop, the capital of Crim Tartary, taken by the Russians, ii. 103.

Predislas, son of the king of Bohemia, takes Moravia from the Poles, ii. 369. Takes Gnesna, demands the body of St. Adalbert, and is cheated by the townsmen, 372. Is obliged to restore all his Polish conquests, 376.

Prices of commodities, how regulated, i. 99.

Protestants, massacre of, at Paris, i. 17.

Prussia, the inhabitants of, put themselves under the protection of Casimir king of Poland, against the tyranny of the Teutonic knights, ii. 449. State of their suffering by the war with these knights, 451. Is secured by treaty with Sigismond king of Poland, to Albert of Brandenburg, 458. Albert Tredenti receives investiture of the duchy from Sigismond Augustus king of Poland, 465. Treaty of Welaw, between the elector of Brandenburg and John Casimir king of Poland, 490. Alliance between the king of, and the king of

Poland, 528. The ministers of, endeavour to corrupt members of the Polish diet, 554. The diet at Warsaw obstructed and dissolved by the like means, 556. The king of, seizes the electorate of Saxony, 570. Sends troops into Poland, who carry off prince Sulowski, 573. Insist on Biron's restoration to the duchy of Courland, 581. The king of, freely disclaims all pretensions to Polish Prussia, 588. Embroils the affairs of Poland, 603. Foment the discontents of the Dissidents, 604. Enters into a negociation for the Partition of Poland, 610. His duplicity of conduct to throw the Poles into confusion, 617. Seizes Polish Prussia, 619. His share in the dismemberment of Poland, 622. Remarks on his conduct respecting the city of Dantzic, 648.

Przemyslas drives the Hungarians out of Poland, ii. 351. Is proclaimed duke of Poland, 352.

Przemyslas king of Poland, assassinated by the marquises of Brandenburg, ii. 416. His character, *ibid.*

Pultawa, battle of, between the czar Peter and Charles XII. of Sweden, i. 570. The battle described, ii. 137.

R.

Radziowski, cardinal bishop of Warmia, disputes in the Polish diet, on his claim of precedence, ii. 513. His treachery to Augustus, 522.

Radziwil, prince Charles, palatine of Wilna joins the party of count Branicki against prince Czartorinski and his Russian allies, ii. 592. Is confined and his goods confiscated, 610. Becomes marshal-general of the Lithuanian confederacy, 611.

Ragotski, George, prince of Transylvania, his insolent pretension to the crown of Poland, ii. 487.

Rebels, if pardoned, ought not to be restored to liberty, ii. 63.

Reformation, the doctrines of, received in the Netherlands, i. 12. See Netherlands.

Repnin, prince, the Russian minister in Poland, presents a memorial to Stanislas in favour of the Dissidents, ii. 599. Seizes the bishops of Cracow and Kiowia, the palatine of Cracow, and starost of Delinski, and sends them to Russia, 280, 612. His justifi-

I N D E X.

justification of this violence, *ibid.* Articles procured for the Dissidents by his influence, 614.

Republics, the general principles of commerce in, i. 102.

Revel and Estonia, account of that Russian government, ii. 3.

Richsa, the widow of Miecislav II. king of Poland, is left regent of the kingdom and guardian of her son prince Casimir, ii. 370. Favours Germans and is forced to fly, 371.

Riga, the capital of Livonia, taken by prince Mentzikoff, ii. 144. State of exports and imports there, 323.

Romanzow, general, takes the town of Colberg, ii. 230.

Rotterdam, the Jews driven from Antwerp by the duke d'Alva, settle there and at Amsterdam, i. 104. The natural security of the city, 117.

Russian empire, amazing extent of, ii. 1. Account of the province of Livonia, 2. Revel and Estonia, 3. Archangel, 4. Lapland, 5. The city of Moscow, *ibid.* The duchy of Smolensko, 6. Duchy of Novogorod, 7. The Ukraine, *ibid.* Wosnez, 8. Astracan, *ibid.* Orembourg, 10. Description of Siberia, 11. The Ostiaks, 12. The Burates, 13. Kamskatka, *ibid.* The original inhabitants, 14. General state of the country, *ibid.* Earliest account of the Russian government, 15. A tribute imposed on by the Hungarians, 17. Method of the antient princes in chusing a wife, *ibid.* Wars of prince Igor, 18. The Christian religion introduced by the princess Olgha, 19. The Greek church persuasion established by Wladimir, 21. The first code of ecclesiastical laws published by Jaroslaw, 22. The prince of, takes the title of grand-duke, *ibid.* This title altered to that of czar, 23. The territory of Moscow erected into an independent principality, and the city made the capital of all the Russias, *ibid.* The empire ravaged by the Tartars, *ibid.* Alexander Newski made grand duke by the Tartars, 24. Iwan Danielowitz made grand duke, 26. Confusion of the Russian annals, 27. Demetrius III. made grand duke, *ibid.* Iwan Basilewitz marries the grand-daughter of Emanuel II. emperor of Constantinople,

ibid. He takes Moscow, and drives the Tartars out of Russia, 28. Novogorod and Kasan reduced, *ibid.* The Crim Tartars reduced to submit to peace by the czar Basil, 29. A commercial treaty entered into with England, *ibid.* State of the Russian people at this time, 30. Alliance between Basil and Maximilian emperor of Germany, 31. Iwan his son, the first who was proclaimed czar of all the Russias, and who wore a crown, 35. Is a severe preserver of justice, 36. Kasan and Astracan conquered from the Tartars, 38. An ambassador sent from queen Elizabeth of England, 39. Iwan's treatment of Livonia, 41. Death and character of Iwan, 43. His code of Russian laws, 45. The primate of, made an independent patriarch, 49. Brutal actions of the favourite minister Boris Godunow, 50. Boris poisons the czar Theodore, 52. Boris chosen czar, 53. Story of the pretender Griscza Utrepou, 56. Boris poisons himself, 58. Griscza proclaimed czar by the troops, 59. Is killed, 62. Basil Suiski made czar in his room, 64. Is the first who entered into a contract with his subjects, *ibid.* Andrew Nogoy's rebellion, 65. Basil deposed, 67. Moscow seized by Sigismund king of Poland, 68. The city burnt and many of the inhabitants massacred by the Poles, 71. The Poles destroyed, 72. Michael Romanow elected czar, 73. Peace concluded with Sweden and Poland, 74. Death of Michael, and accession of his son Alexis, 77. Popular tumult against prince Morosow the minister appeased, 79. Edict against the oppressions of the nobles, 80. War with Poland, 81. Death and character of Alexis, 82. Accession of Theodore Alexiowitz, 83. He destroys the titles of the antient nobility, 84. Dies, *ibid.* Commotions of the Strelitz guards, 85. John and Peter proclaimed joint czars with the princess Sophia co-regent, 86. Her intrigues with prince Gallitzin, 87, 91, 93. A treaty concluded with China, 94. Death of the czar Iwan, 99. Asoph taken, 100. The czar Peter travels in the train of an embassy, 104. He works as a ship-builder at Amsterdam, 105. A revolt in favour of old customs, 108. Peter returns and breaks the Strelitzes, 109. Reforms his army

I N D E X.

army and all the departments of his government, 110. The office of patriarch abolished, 111. Monastic vows restrained, 112. Secret cause of the defeat of the Russian army at Narva, 117. Archangel fortified, 120. Mariembourg taken, 122. Peter marries Catherine a Livonian captive, *ibid.* A printing-office established at Moscow, *ibid.* The town of Petersburg founded, 123. Battle of Pultawa, 137. War declared against Turkey, 147. Law relating to inheritance, 161. History of the czar's son prince Alexis, 170. Civil regulations, 180. Peter's zealous encouragement of manufactures, 181. His public works, 182. History of the trade with China, 184. Peter's commercial treaty with the emperor of China, 185. Judicial proceedings reformed, 187. Ecclesiastical reformatiions, 190. Advantageous peace with Sweden, 194. Derbent conquered, 197. The empress Catherine crowned, 199. Death of Peter, 201. Is succeeded by his empress Catherine, 202. The first acts of her government, 206. Death of Catherine, 208. Her testament, *ibid.* Accession of Peter Alexiowitz, 212. Disgrace and exile of Mentzikoff, *ibid.* Anne duchess dowager of Courland, succeeds to the crown, 216. Her death, and character of her government, 218. The duke and duchess of Brunswic with their son Iwan, arrested and confined, 221. Elizabeth Petrowna declared empress, *ibid.* Peace of Abo, 223. Peace with Kouli Kan, *ibid.* Defensive alliance with Sweden, 224. An offensive and defensive alliance entered into with the courts of Vienna and Dresden, against the king of Prussia, 225. Operations of the war with Prussia, 226. This war not agreeable to the great duke, who secretly obstructs it, 227. Death and character of the empress Elizabeth, 231. Accession of Peter III. 232. The first acts of his reign, 233. His declaration to his allies, 234. His plan for a general peace, 235. His internal arrangements, 240. His attempts on ecclesiastical property, 241. Catherine declared sole empress, 244. Peter arrested, 246. His formal resignation, 246, 250. Remarks on this revolution, 251. The first acts of Catherine's government, 257. She undertakes to form a

new code of laws, 258. Remarks on her plan, 259. A defensive alliance concluded with Prussia, 267. Death of the unfortunate prince Iwan, 268. Church lands annexed to the crown, and pensions assigned to the clergy, 274. Moravians tolerated, *ibid.* War with Turkey, 284. Final event of this war, 288. A review of the present form of government, 289. The sovereign absolute without security, *ibid.* Laws and administration of justice, 290. Criminal processes, 293. Proceedings of the secret inquisition, 294. Ecclesiastical causes, 296. Great extent of parental authority, *ibid.* Authority of husbands over their wives, 297. Power of the proprietors of fiefs over their slaves, 297. Sales and alienations of estates registered, 298. Public executions, 299. Manners of the common people, 301. Their religious notions, 302. Classes of the people, 303. Orders of nobility, *ibid.* The clergy, 306. The lawyers, 307. Citizens and merchants, *ibid.* The seamen, 310. Marriage ceremonies, *ibid.* Their method of bathing, 311. The women great painters of themselves, 312. The Tartars, 313. Extraordinary changes made in the state of, by Peter I. 315. The natives now freely at liberty to travel, 317. Dignities and employments very precarious, *ibid.* The country extremely well situated for commerce, 320. Number of inhabitants, *ibid.* Agriculture depressed, 323. Exports and imports, *ibid.* State of arts and manufactures, 328. State of the revenues at the accession of Peter I. 329. Augmentation of, at his death, 330. Present amount of the revenues, *ibid.* Maritime force of, 331. Land forces of, 334. Great want of discipline among the troops, *ibid.* Fortifications, 336. Causes of the various revolutions that have happened in the state, 338. Rurick, and his brothers, the first sovereigns of Russia, ii. 15. Rzewski, palatine of Podolia, elected great marshal of the crown of Poland, ii. 560.

S.

Salza, Herman, grand master of the Teutonic order, his treaty with Conrad, regent of Poland, ii. 409. Samoiedes, some account of that people, ii. 11.

Samo-

I N D E X.

- Samohely, palatine of Great Poland, unites with the Teutonic knights against Uladislas Loketek king of Poland, ii. 423. Betrays his allies to Uladislas, 425.
- Sapieha, general of Lithuania, excommunicated by the bishop of Wilna, ii. 514.
- Saxons, inquiry after their origin, i. 439.
- Sbignee, natural son of Uladislas king of Poland, revolts against his father, ii. 388. Revolts against his brother Boleslas, 390. Is banished for his turbulence, 391.
- Scaurus, the Roman general, is defeated and taken prisoner by the Cimbri, i. 154.
- Schaffiroff, vice-chancellor of Russia, sentenced to death for extortion, is pardoned by the czar Peter, ii. 198.
- Schimmelman, baron de, chief part of the revenues of Norway mortgaged to him, i. 411. Is appointed treasurer of Denmark, 412.
- Sciold, the son of Wodin, the first king of Denmark, i. 163. His successors, 184.
- Scout-master of Amsterdam, his office, i. 56.
- Siberia, description of that country, ii. 11. The dominion of gained by the czar Theodore, 49. Causes relating to the mines of, how determined, 298. Character of the natives, 314.
- Sigebret, a mean Dutch woman, her influence over Christian II. king of Denmark, i. 246. Her cousin a barber, one of his chief ministers, 249. They advise him to cut off the principal families of Sweden, 250. The barber made a bishop, 253.
- Sigismund, king of Poland, succeeds to the crown of Sweden, i. 541.
- Sigismund, marquis of Brandenburg, obtains a grant of the province of Silesia from Lewis king of Hungary and Poland, ii. 432. Is acknowledged by Lewis, his successor in Poland, and is sent to govern that nation, 435. The princess Hedwige chosen queen to exclude him, *ibid.*
- Sigismund, prince of Sweden, elected king of Poland, obliges his competitor the archduke Maximilian to renounce his pretensions, ii. 471. Succeeds to the crown of Sweden, 474. Is defeated by Charles duke of Sudermania, 475. Loses the crown of Sweden, 476. Contentions between him and his Polish nobility, *ibid.* His war and treaty with sultan Osman, 480. His disputes with the diet, *ibid.* His death and character, 481.
- Sigismund, duke of Lithuania, elected king of Poland, ii. 457. His treaty with Albert of Brandenburg, grand master of the Teutonic order, *ibid.* His character, 459. His prudent government, 460.
- Sigismund Augustus, is elected king of Poland, ii. 461. His secret marriage, *ibid.* Endeavours of the diet to make him dissolve his marriage, 462. His treaties with the grand master of the Teutonic order, 464. Confers the investiture of the duchy of Prussia on Albert Tredenti of Brandenburg, 465. His death and character, 466.
- Silanus, the Roman consul, is defeated by the Cimbri, i. 154.
- Silesia, is ceded to Uladislas the fugitive duke of Poland, ii. 398. Is divided among his three sons, *ibid.* Is ceded to Sigismund marquis of Brandenburg, 432.
- Slavery inconsistent with civilization, ii. 205.
- Sleswic, the duchy of, acquired by Christian king of Denmark, i. 232.
- Smolensko, duchy of, in Russia, some account of, ii. 6.
- Sobieski, John, is made great general of the crown of Poland, ii. 494. Raises an army to oppose the invasion of the Tartars and Cossacks, 495. His great victory over them, 496. Reduces the Cossacks again, 499. Heads a confederacy of the army against king Michael Wieknowiecki, 501. Defeats an army of Tartar and Cossack invaders, 502. Persuades the Polish diet to annul the treaty made by the king with the Turks, *ibid.* Defeats the Turks at Chockzin, 504. Is elected king of Poland, 505. Defeats the Turks again, *ibid.* Concludes a peace with the Turks, 507. His embassy to Constantinople, *ibid.* Proceedings in the diet at Grodno, 508. Assists the emperor of Germany against the Turks, and raises the siege of Vienna, 510. His disputes with the Polish diet, *ibid.* Outrages committed at Warsaw by the servants of the Polish and Lithuanian members of the diet, 515. His reasons for not leaving any written testament behind him, 516. His death and character, 517.
- Sobieski, Mark, reduces the revolted city of Dantzic for king Stephen Battori, ii. 470.

Soltikoff,

I N D E X.

- Soltikoff, general of the Russian army, his successes in Prussia, ii. 228. Restrains his operations to oblige the great duke, 229. Is superseded by field-marshal Butterlin, 230.
- Sophia, princess, animates the Strelitz guards to revolt against her brother the czar Peter, ii. 85. Is associated with John and Peter in the administration of government, 86. Justifies the violence of the Strelitzes, *ibid.* Puts Kovanski to death treacherously, 90. Conspires against the life of her brother Peter, 93. Is shut up in a convent, *ibid.* Her second conspiracy, 103.
- Sound, the passage of, described, i. 146.
- Specie, its proper use in commerce, i. 96.
- Spice trade of the United Provinces, the regulations imposed on it, i. 121.
- Stadtholder of the United Provinces, his office and authority, i. 65. Is made hereditary in the prince of Orange's family, 139.
- Stanislaus Leczinski, is elected king of Poland by Charles XII. of Sweden in the room of Augustus, ii. 523. Is crowned, 524. His answer to Augustus's letter, 526. Augustus restored by the battle of Pultawa, 527. Loses the duchy of Deux Ponts, which Charles had ceded to him, 530. Is elected again by one party, on the death of Augustus, 536. Is forced to retire with the title of king, and the duchies of Lorraine and Bar, 537. His letter to his Polish friends, *ibid.*
- Stanislaus Augustus, king of Poland. See Poniatowski.
- States, the three orders constituting the assembly of, and the antiquity of, i. 6. The occasions on which they met, 8. Of Holland, the times of meeting, and for what purposes, 58.
- States General of the United Provinces, how formed, and their power, i. 60. How represented at present, 61. Mode of doing business, 62.
- Steinbock, the Swedish general, his remarkable victory over the Danes, i. 572.
- Steno Sture, the nephew of Charles Canutson, made administrator of Sweden, i. 463. Is informed of the intrigues of the archbishop of Upsal, 468. Defeats and deposes him, 470. Is defeated and killed by Otho Crumpin, 477.
- Stephen Battori elected king of Poland, ii. 470. Reforms the internal government of his kingdom, 471. Plants colonies in the Ukraine, *ibid.* His war with Russia, 472. His death and character, 473.
- Stockholm, description of that city, i. 436. Is besieged and taken by Christian, 483. Is invested by Gustavus Ericson, 499. The city capitulates, 506. Mode of business in the assembly of the States there, 590.
- Stralsund, the town of built, i. 199.
- Strelitz guards in Russia, a body of troops resembling the Janissaries in Turkey, ii. 85. Revolt of, on the accession of the czar Peter, *ibid.* Proclaim John and Peter jointly with the princess Sophia regents, 86. Raise a commotion in favour of two fanatical preachers, 88. Are headed by Kovanski, 89. Rise to revenge his death, 90. Submit, and are dispersed by prince Gallitzin, 91. Revolt again and march to Moscow to depose the czar, 108. Are reduced, 109. Are severely punished and broke by Peter, *ibid.*
- Struensee, count, the party formed against him, i. 354. Is apprehended, 355. How a confession was extorted from him, 357. The sentence passed against him, 358. His unjust treatment by his prosecutors, 359. Secret history of his disgrace, 424.
- Sulhowski, prince, seized and carried from his house by Prussian troops, ii. 573.
- Sweden receives Woden, and accepts his son Yugue for king, i. 163. The antient form of government as described by Tacitus, 173. The sovereignty of, acquired by Margaret queen of Denmark and Norway, 213. The union of Calmar, 215. Eric expelled, 225. Charles Canutson elected king, 227. Who is expelled by Christian king of Denmark, 231. The accession of John acknowledged in the diet of Helmstadt, 236. Ill treatment of, by Christian II. 249. The principal nobility of, cut off by Christian, 252. Limits of the kingdom, 430. The soil in general very barren, *ibid.* Cattle and wild animals, 431. Lakes and woods, 432. The mines, 433. The seasons, 434. Its division into provinces, 435. Principal cities, *ibid.* Description of Stockholm, 436. Account of Gottenburg, 437. Inquiry after its original inhabitants, 438. Earliest account to be depended on of its government, 440. Antient power and revenues of the crown, 441. The senate, 442.

I N D E X.

442. The clergy, 443. Exorbitant power acquired by the bishops, 444. The ancient nobility, 445. The common people, *ibid.* Its turbulent constitution, 447. Magnus Smeck attempts to render himself absolute, 448. Albert of Mecklenburg elected king, *ibid.* Pursues the like ends as Magnus, 449. He is defeated and taken prisoner by Margaret of Norway, 452. Her politic conduct to establish her authority, 454. Imprudent administration of Eric, 455. He is expelled, 456. Charles Canutson elected king, 458. Who irritates the clergy against him, 459. The archbishop of Upsal takes up arms against him, *ibid.* Quits the kingdom to Christian II. of Denmark, 460. Confusions of the contending parties, 462. Steno Sture made administrator, 463. Violences committed by Christian armed with the pope's bull, 473. The administrator defeated by Otho Crumpin, 476. Stockholm taken by Christian, 484. Massacre of the senators, 485. Revolt in Dalecarlia under Gustavus Ericson, 491. Gustavus elected king, 505. The city of Stockholm capitulates, 506. Gustavus enters into a league with Denmark, 512. His motives for deferring his coronation, 513. Explains himself to the chancellor, 514. Steps taken by Gustavus to favour the reformation, and abridge the power of the clergy, 517. His answer to the remonstrances of the bishops, 520. Religious conference at Upsal, 521. Gustavus seizes part of the ecclesiastical revenues, 523. The power and riches of the clergy reduced by the assembly of the states, 529. A revolt excited by the clergy in Dalecarlia, 531. The Lutheran religion established, 534. The crown settled in the family of Gustavus, 538. His death and character, 540. Accession and deposition of Eric, *ibid.* War with Moscovy, 541. Troubles between the Catholics and Lutherans, 542. Charles IX. elected king, *ibid.* Accession of Gustavus Adolphus, 543. Wars in Moscovy, Poland, and Prussia, *ibid.* Victories in Germany, 544. Accession of Christina, *ibid.* Her resignation and accession of Charles Gustavus, 545. War with Poland, *ibid.* German and Danish wars, 546. Punishes his evil ministers, 548. The senate suppressed,

549. The king recovers the crown lands, 553. Regulates the militia, 554. He is rendered absolute by concessions of the states, 555. The laws revised, 557. The king impoverishes his subjects to amass wealth, 558. Accession of Charles XII. 559. The neighbouring powers combine to ruin him, 560. Denmark reduced, 561. Battle of Narva, 562. Charles's successes in Poland, 564. He defeats Augustus, 565. Battle of Pultawa, 570. Distressed situation of the kingdom, 575. New taxes and oppressions, 577. Peace concluded with Russia, 580. Expedition of Charles to Norway, 581. His death and character, 582. Situation of the kingdom at this time, 584. Frederic of Hesse Cassel elected king, 585. Limitations of the regal authority, 586. The states of the kingdom how composed, 588. Order of the clergy, 589. Representatives of the burghers, *ibid.* Mode of business in the assembly of the states, 590. Account of the hat and cap parties, 591. Intrigues of the court of France, 592. State of parties at the accession of Gustavus the reigning king, 594. Articles of capitulation sworn to by him, 596. Review of the present form of government, 599. Courts of justice, 624. Consistories for ecclesiastical causes, 625. Courts relating to the mines, 627. Register of estates, 628. Criminal causes, *ibid.* State of the church, 629. Classes of inhabitants, 631. Nobility, *ibid.* Clergy and lawyers, 632. Common people, 633. Roads, 634. Learning, *ibid.* Regulation of marriages, 636. Number of inhabitants, 638. State of trade and manufactures, 639. Agriculture, 640. Exports of the country, *ibid.* Militia, 643. Agriculture here injured by manufactures, 645. The proceedings in the law courts oppressive, 649. Iron the staple commodity, 651. Trade to England discouraged, and to France encouraged, 652. Hemp and flax trade, *ibid.* Smuggling greatly practised there, 653. Current specie, 654. Precarious state of exchange, 655. Trade to Spain and Portugal, 656. Trade to France the most disadvantageous of any, *ibid.* East India Company, 657. No encouragement given to foreign merchants there, 658. Revenues of the crown, 659. Subsidy from

I N D E X.

from France, *ibid.* National debt, 660. Military strength of the kingdom, *ibid.* Regulations of the militia by Charles XI. 661. Number of land forces, 664. State of the marine, 665. Military regulations in time of war, 667. Causes of the various revolutions that have happened in this country. 668,

T.

Tacitus, his account of the form of government among the northern nations, i. 167. His account of the antient inhabitants of Poland, ii. 349.

Tartars, characters of the several classes of, ii. 313.

Teutones, a great army of, defeated by the consul Marius, i. 157.

Teutonic knights, are taken into the service of Conrad regent of Poland, ii. 409. Their avarice and ambition, *ibid.* Seize the city of Dantzic which they were called in to defend against the marquisses of Brandenburg, 418. Their cruel usurpations, 420. Become masters of all Pomerania, *ibid.* They are excommunicated, 422. Are defeated by Uladislas Loketek king of Poland, 424. Pomerania ceded to them by Casimir, 426. Great victory gained over by Jagellon king of Poland, 440. The Prussians protected against them by Casimir king of Poland, 449. Treaty of peace between them and Poland, 450. Albert of Brandenburg chosen grand master, 458. His treaty with Sigismund king of Poland, *ibid.* The grand master acknowledges himself by treaty a vassal of the crown of Poland, 464.

Texel, the difficulty of navigating that channel, i. 117.

Theodore, the son of Iwan, succeeds his father as czar of Russia, ii. 48. Acquires the sovereignty of Siberia, 49. Brutal conduct of his favourite Boris Godunow, 50. Is poisoned by him, 52. His character, *ibid.*

Theodore Alexiowitz, czar of Russia, the first acts of his administration, ii. 83. Destroys the titles of the antient nobility, 84. Nominates his younger brother Peter for his successor, and dies, *ibid.*

Theodore Romanow, archbishop of Rostow, his son Michael elected czar of Russia, ii. 73. He is made patriarch of Russia, *ibid.*

His address to his son on this occasion, 75.

Thorn, ineffectual conference there, for the accommodation of religious differences in Poland, ii. 484. Outrages excited there by the Jesuits against the Lutheran college, 532. A Polish confederacy formed there under Prussian influence, 606. Their manifesto, *ibid.*

Tirley, great marshal of the crown of Poland, his speech in favour of toleration at the coronation of Henry duke of Anjou, ii. 468.

Tobolskoy, the capital of Siberia, some account of, ii. 12.

Turks, how induced to declare war against Russia, i. 592. ii. 284.

V.

Valdemar I. king of Denmark, restores order, and reforms the laws, i. 196. Founds the castle of Dantzic, 197.

Valdemar II. king of Denmark, his prudent establishments, i. 199. Forms and enforces the Jutland code of laws, 200.

Vanda, the daughter of Cracus, elected queen of Poland, ii. 351.

Venda, in Livonia, the unhappy fate of that town, ii. 41, 42.

Uglitz, the town of, in Russia, brutally destroyed by Boris Godunow, ii. 51.

Vienna, is besieged by the Turks, and relieved by John Sobieski king of Poland, ii. 510.

Ukraine, description of that country, ii. 7. Is repeopled by Stephen Battori king of Poland, 471. See Cossacks.

Uladislas, son of Sigismund king of Poland, is offered the crown of Russia on conditions, ii. 68. Invades Russia, but consents to a peace, 74.

Uladislas, king of Poland, his deference to the papal authority, ii. 384. Poisons Miecislav the son of his predecessor Boleslas, 386. His wars in Prussia and Pomerania, *ibid.* Rebellion of his two natural sons Sbignee and Boleslas, 388. His death, 390.

Uladislas, eldest son of Boleslas, duke of Poland, his share of his father's dominions, ii. 394. Attempts to dispossess his brothers, but is forced to take refuge in Germany, 396. Silesia ceded to him, 398.

I N D E X.

Uladislas, the eldest son of Miecislav, elected duke of Poland, ii. 406. Resigns the government to his cousin Leszko, 407.

Uladislas Loketek, is elected king of Poland, but is deposed for debauchery and cruelty, ii. 417. Is restored and reformed, 418. Defeats the Teutonic knights, 424. His death and character, 425.

Uladislas, the son of Jagellon, is elected king of Poland by the address of the bishop of Cracow, ii. 443. Is invited to the throne of Hungary and crowned, 444. Is killed in battle by the Turks, 446.

Uladislas, the son of Sigismund, elected king of Poland, ii. 482. His victories over the Russians and Turks, 483. His ineffectual attempt to unite the different sects in his dominions, 484. Is tyrannized over by his nobles, 485. His death and character, *ibid.*

Union of Calmar, translation of that law, i. 215. Is renewed, 222.

United Provinces of the Low Countries, the first confederacy of, formed, i. 31. Impression on the first money they coined, 33. The reformed religion established in, 37. Prince Maurice succeeds to his father's employments, *ibid.* Receive indirect support from England, 38. Offer their sovereignty to queen Elizabeth, 39. The earl of Leicester chosen governor of, 40. Prince Maurice chosen governor, 41. Prosecute a trade to the East Indies, 46. Offers of peace made to them, *ibid.* A truce for twelve years concluded, 49. Seize the town of Juliers, 50. Wesel seized by Albert in retaliation, *ibid.* A peace concluded, 51. Their present form of government, 52. Political character of the people, 71. Classes of the inhabitants, 73. Their manners, 74. Their antient frugality corrupted, 78. Their constitutional characters, 79. The country unhealthy, 81. How drained, *ibid.* Religion, 82. A general toleration allowed, 83. Were peopled by protestant refugees, 104. Their commercial regulations, 106. The natural strength of the country, 108. Account of the bank of Amsterdam, 110. The bankrupt laws there, oppressive, 112. Circumstances that encourage and fix trade there, 116. The country not eminent in manufactures, 118. Number of inhabitants, 119. Dearness of provisions, *ibid.*

The Herring and Greenland fisheries, 120. Regulations of their spice trade, 121. Their American and Levant trade, 123. Balance of trade between them and England, stated at different periods, *ibid.* Used formerly to consume only the coarsest of their importations, 125. Commercial genius of the inhabitants estimated, 126. Their ancient military force, 127. Their present strength, 129. Revenue, 130. Their public debts, 131. Their taxes, 132. Their standing forces, 133. Causes of the various revolutions that have happened among them, traced, 134. Barneveldt's cabals, 136. Insurrection against the pensioner De Witt, 137. The office of stadtholder made hereditary in the prince of Orange's family, 139. Reflections on their present situation, 140.

Voltaire, a mistake of his in the Swedish history corrected, i. 579.

Upsal, the archbishop of, takes up arms against Charles Canutson king of Sweden, i. 248, 459. Proclaims Christian II. of Denmark king, 460. Is confined by Christian, 461. Is released and taken into favour, 462. His intrigues, 465. They are discovered by Arcemboldi the pope's legate, 468. Is obliged to resign his dignity, 471. Returns on the defeat and death of the administrator, and procures Christian to be acknowledged, 478. His tyranny, 486. Is defeated by Gustavus Ericson, 498. Retires to Denmark, 499. Crowns Frederic I. of Denmark king of Sweden, 507. Is superseded by another prelate, 512.

Utrecht, the union of, the foundation of the government afterward established in the United Provinces, i. 30. Principal articles of, 31. The constitution of that province, 68.

W.

Warsaw, short account of that city, ii. 347.

Weslaw, treaty of, between John Casimir king of Poland, and the elector of Brandenburg, ii. 490.

Wencislas king of Bohemia, is elected king of Poland, ii. 417. Dies, 418.

Wesel, seized by the archduke Albert, in retaliation for the Dutch seizing Juliers, i. 50.

Wibourg

I N D E X.

Wibourg in Finland, is taken from the Swedes by the czar Peter, ii. 144.

Wiecknowiecki, Michael, elected king of Poland, ii. 499. Disgusts his subjects, 500. Raises a confederacy against that of John Sobieski, 501. His inglorious treaty with the Turks, 502. His death and character, 504.

Wilczewski, nonce of Wisna, informs the Polish diet at Grodno of the indirect practices of the Prussian ministers to corrupt the members, ii. 554.

Wilna, bishop of, copy of his excommunication of Casimir Sapieha, general of Lithuania, ii. 514.

Wismar, the town of, besieged and taken by a Hanoverian army, allies of Russia, ii. 162.

Wladimir I. the natural son of Igor, gains possession of all the Russias, ii. 20. Becomes a Christian according to the Greek church, 21. His twelve sons destroy each other until Jaroslaw acquires all their dominions, *ibid.*

Wladimir II. sovereign of all the Russias, his wars and glorious reign, ii. 23.

Woden, the antient king of Scandinavia, traditionary accounts of, i. 160. Is driven northward by Pompey, 161. His settlement and exploits, 162. Establishes his son Sciold in Denmark, 163. Gains pos-

session of Sweden where his son Yugue is chosen king, *ibid.* His civil and religious regulations there, 164. Conquers Norway and establishes his son Soemungue there, 164. His death, *ibid.* The motives by which he was actuated, 165. The great reverence preserved for his memory, 166. The form of government established by him, 167.

Wrangel, field-marshal, the Swedish general, defeated in Germany, i. 546.

Y.

Yugue, the son of Woden, elected king of Sweden, i. 164.

Z.

Zamoscki, count, his hostile measures to recover a private right, ii. 566.

Zealand, the constitution of that province, i. 68.

Zealand in Denmark, situation of that province, i. 146. A code of laws published for, by Eric VI. 206.

Ziemomilas, king of Poland, his character, ii. 358.

Ziemovit, succeeds his father Piaft, as king of Poland, ii. 357. Teaches his subjects laws and military discipline, 358.

Zolkiewski, the Polish general, his bravery and unhappy fate, ii. 477.

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